

Col Shackelford

HISTORY

OF THE

Muscle Shoals Baptist Association

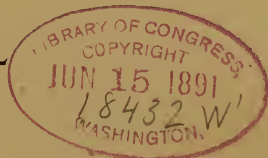
FROM 1820 TO 1890, A PERIOD OF 70 YEARS,

WITH A HISTORY OF THE CHURCHES OF THE
SAME AND A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
OF ITS MINISTERS.

BY

REV. JOSEPHUS SHACKELFORD, D. D.

~ ~ ~ ~



ALSO

A SHORT SKETCH OF GENERAL BAPTIST
HISTORY BY

REV. MATHEW LYON.

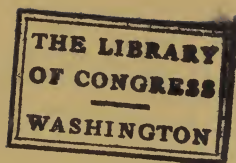
~ ~ ~ ~

TRINITY, ALA.:

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR.

1891.

BX6209
M9S5



COPYRIGHT, 1891,

BY

JOSEPHUS SHACKELFORD.

PRESS OF
THE WERNER PRINTING & LITHO. CO.,
AKRON, O.—CHICAGO, ILL.

*This volume is dedicated to
my wife,*

MRS. ANN CORDELIA SHACKELFORD,

*who has been a helpmeet indeed to me
for the last thirty-five years that we have
lived together; and to the brethren and
sisters of the Muscle Shoals Association*

BY THE AUTHOR.

∴ PREFACE. ∴

IN preparing this history, the author has labored under many difficulties. He was not able to find a file of the minutes of the association from its organization; but fortunately he found a sketch prepared by Elder John L. Townes, and published in the minutes of 1840. This helped him some. He then had to hunt up from various sources the minutes of the intervening years between 1840 and 1856, the year that he came into the association. After a long time he succeeded in finding them. Then he had a difficulty about getting up the history of the churches. Many brethren to whom he applied for information were slow to give it; in some cases the old church records were lost, and he had to refer to the minutes of the association for some facts concerning them. He has done the best he could under the circumstances. It was his desire to preserve the history of the Baptists of the Muscle Shoals Association, a body which has existed for seventy years; and he knew that if this was not done soon many interesting facts about the early planting of Baptist churches in this portion of Alabama would be lost. He is aware that there are imperfections in the work, and he would like to have time to remedy them, but friends have insisted upon the publication as soon as possible; and, in obedience to their request, he sends it to the press.

In preparing the biographical sketches of the ministers, he has given such as the material furnished him enabled

him to give. It would have given him great pleasure to have given a sketch of all the old ministers who have been connected with the association, and have passed away. He has given a sketch of most of them, but there were some whose lives he could learn very little about. These are omitted. Again, some of the living ministers have been left out—some because they would not answer inquiries sent to them, and some for other reasons. In these sketches, the author does not wish the reader to understand that it is all original matter. He has simply compiled what others have said, in many instances, and in some he has changed or re-arranged the matter and facts stated to suit his own taste. He is indebted, as before stated, to the sketch prepared by Elder John L. Townes, for the early history of the association, for the first twenty years. He is also indebted to Borum's History of Tennessee Baptist Ministers for the sketches of Elders Burns and Barksdale. A number of brethren of the association have furnished him with facts and items of information about the churches and ministers, which he has incorporated in the history of the churches and the sketches of the ministers.

Trusting that this book may be kindly received, and that it may prove interesting reading to the younger members of the association as well as to the older ones, the author sends it forth as a contribution to Baptist history, with the prayer that God's blessing may attend it.

JOS. SHACKELFORD.

TRINITY, ALA., *January*, 1891.

.: CONTENTS. :.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
ORIGIN OF THE ASSOCIATION, 1820	11

CHAPTER II.

SESSIONS OF ASSOCIATION FROM 1821-30	17
------------------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER III.

SESSIONS OF ASSOCIATION FROM 1831-40	27
------------------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER IV.

SESSIONS OF ASSOCIATION FROM 1841-46—THE ASSOCIATION BECOMES A MISSIONARY BODY, 1846	39
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER V.

SESSIONS OF ASSOCIATION FROM 1847-56—THE ASSOCIATION A MISSIONARY BODY	49
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER VI.

SESSIONS OF ASSOCIATION FROM 1857-60—THE ASSOCIATION PROSPEROUS	69
------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER VII.

SESSIONS OF ASSOCIATION FROM 1861-67—TROUBLOUS TIMES, WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION	80
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER VIII.

SESSIONS OF ASSOCIATION FROM 1868-75—RECOVERING FROM THE WAR	88
---------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER IX.

SESSIONS OF ASSOCIATION FROM 1876-84—YELLOW FEVER AT DECATUR IN 1878—ASSOCIATION PROSPEROUS	103
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER X.

SESSIONS OF ASSOCIATION FROM 1885-88—RESOLUTIONS ON CHURCH INDEPENDENCE AND ASSOCIATIONAL AUTHORITY,	119
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XI.

SESSIONS OF ASSOCIATION FROM 1889-90—CONSTITUTION AND RULES OF DECORUM—ARTICLES OF FAITH	131
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

HISTORY OF THE CHURCHES.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS	147
RUSSELL VALLEY CHURCH	147
RUSSELL VALLEY CHURCH, No. 2	150
RUSSELLVILLE CHURCH	151
TOWN CREEK CHURCH	153
CARMEL CHURCH	154
SPRING HILL CHURCH	155
SALEM CHURCH, LAWRENCE COUNTY	155
MT. PLEASANT CHURCH	156
SALEM CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY	158
MT. PISGAH CHURCH	160
MT. NEBO CHURCH, FRANKLIN COUNTY	164
ENON CHURCH	165
BETHEL CHURCH, LAWRENCE COUNTY	166
HOPEWELL CHURCH	169
COURTLAND CHURCH	171
LIBERTY CHURCH	173
SHILO CHURCH	174
FRIENDSHIP CHURCH	176
MOULTON CHURCH	177
MACEDONIA CHURCH, FRANKLIN COUNTY	179
SHOAL CREEK CHURCH	180
TUSCUMBIA CHURCH	181
PLEASANT HILL CHURCH	183
DECATUR CHURCH	184
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, NEW DECATUR	187
HILLSBORO CHURCH	188
MT. NEBO CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY	189
MT. ZION CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY	190
ROCKY CREEK CHURCH	191
BETHEL CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY	193
GUM SPRING CHURCH, LAWRENCE COUNTY	193
GUM SPRING CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY	194
MACEDONIA CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY	195
OKOLONA CHURCH	195
NEW HOPE CHURCH	196
LEBANON CHURCH	198
BETHANY CHURCH	199
BLUE SPRINGS CHURCH	199
HARMONY CHURCH	200

MT. ZION CHURCH, LAWRENCE COUNTY	200
PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH	201
NEW FRIENDSHIP CHURCH	202
THARP'S SPRING CHURCH	203
MISSION GROVE CHURCH	203
HARTSELL CHURCH	204
DANVILLE CHURCH	205
MT. HOPE CHURCH	206
FALKVILLE CHURCH	207
ETHA CHURCH	207
ZION CHURCH	208
MT. STANLEY CHURCH	208
SOMERVILLE CHURCH	209
SHEFFIELD CHURCH	209
FURNACE HILL CHURCH	210
VALHERMOSA SPRINGS CHURCH	210
NEW PROSPECT CHURCH	211
SHADY GROVE CHURCH	211
CAVE SPRING CHURCH	211

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF MINISTERS.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS	213
ADAMS, S. R. C.	285
BARKER, JOSIAH	230
BARKSDALE, W. H.	243
BURNS, JEREMIAH	217
BESTOR, D. P.	225
BURLESON, RUFUS C.	230
BURLESON, RICHARD B.	233
BRAGG, T. R.	272
CARTER, W. B.	266
COBBS, W. T.	261
CALLAHAN, CHARLES W.	258
CUMMINGS, JOHN M.	284
DAVIS, JOHN	214
FINNEY, MIKE	265
GIBSON, SYLVANUS	238
GUNN, JACKSON	258
HODGES, HENRY W.	2
HUCKABEE, J. B.	263
HALBROOKS, HENRY J.	276

LANE, JOSEPH	223
LATTIMORE, JOHN L.	288
LEIGH, WILLIAM	219
LEIGH, JOHN	225
LYON, MATHEW	252
MUSGROVE, PHILIP M.	246
MCCLANAHAN, JOHN D.	271
NESMITH, JOHN R.	256
ROBERTS, JOHN C.	248
ROBERTS, J. M.	249
SKINNER, THEOPHILOUS	223
SMITH, ABNER	224
SMITH, SOL.	224
STOVALL, ABSALOM L.	235
SPEER, JOHN	273
STEENSON, S. M.	282
STOCKTON, JAMES I.	275
SHACKELFORD, JOSEPHUS	277
TOWNES, JOHN L.	216
VERSER, M. A.	283
WINDES, ENOCH, SR.	239
WINDES, ENOCH, JR.	242
WILHITE, W. W.	287
WILLIAMS, BUTLER	250
WEAVER, T. J.	250
WEAVER, JOHN E.	251
WEAR, ROBERT T.	268

A SKETCH OF CHURCH HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE TIMES OF THE APOSTLES DOWN TO THE IITH CENTURY	293
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY OF BAPTISTS FROM 1890 BACKWARDS TO 1643	299
-----------------------------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER III.

HISTORY OF BAPTISTS FROM 1643 TO THE IOOTH CENTURY,	302
WHAT BAPTISTS BELIEVE ABOUT THE CHURCH	309
THE MISSIONARY AND OLD-SCHOOL BAPTISTS	314
BAPTIST STATISTICS	318

History of Muscle Shoals Baptist Association.

CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN OF THE ASSOCIATION, 1820.

THE territory now occupied by the State of Alabama and Mississippi formerly belonged to Georgia, and was ceded to the Federal Government. In 1798, it was organized into a territory and called the Mississippi territory. In 1817, the eastern part of Mississippi territory was organized as Alabama territory. In 1819, the Alabama territory was received into the Federal Union as a State. The first settlements of whites made in what is now called north Alabama, which is comprehended in that part lying north of the Sand Mountains, and extending to the Tennessee line, were made principally in the counties of Jackson, Madison, Morgan, Limestone, Lawrence, Franklin and Lauderdale, by emigrants from Virginia, Tennessee, North and South Carolina, and Georgia. The country on the western side was occupied by the Chickasaw Indians, and on the eastern side by the Creeks. The land was fertile, particularly that in the Tennessee Valley, and it was well watered, the beautiful Tennessee river flowing through it, with numerous tributaries on either side. It was an inviting country, and soon emigrants poured in from the more eastern States and from Tennessee. These emigrants carried with them their re-

ligious views, and, while they had left their comfortable homes and pleasant surroundings in the older States, to seek homes and fortune in a new country, they did not forget that they were Christians, and their obligations to worship and serve their Heavenly Father. Soon church houses were erected, rough and uncomfortable, it is true, but they served their purposes. Churches were organized, and the voice of the Man of God was heard calling sinners to repentance, and teaching and comforting the people of God. The Baptists and Methodists were the pioneers in this movement of church organization. Baptists were quite numerous among these early settlers, and in a few years, a number of Baptist churches were organized in the territory now included in the above mentioned counties. The first Baptist association organized in North Alabama was called Flint River Association. The churches that formed this association were located principally in Madison, Jackson and Limestone counties, and one or two in Morgan county.

The object of the brethren in organizing this association seemed to be more for the purpose of having a social gathering once a year, and engaging in religious worship, than to do any missionary work, or to mature any plan for the dissemination of the Gospel. In fact, the idea of missionary work, and the gathering of the youth into Sunday Schools, was repugnant to the majority of the churches. Many of their ministers were opposed to missions, and to all societies having for their object the spread of the Gospel. This association remained for a number of years without making any apparent progress in religious work, and finally by its opposition and denunciation of Sunday Schools and missionary societies, as expressed in resolutions withdrawing fellowship from all who affiliated with, or contributed to such societies, it

drove off some of its best men and churches, which organized another association called Liberty on a missionary basis. The resolutions alluded to above were what was called the "*Non-Fellowship Resolutions*," which produced great excitement among all the churches. The Liberty Association still exists and has done much good, while the "Flint River," if it exists at all, is so weak, and of so little importance that we hear nothing of it. Doubtless it may be in existence among our anti-missionary brethren. In the history of this association, and some others, we might mention, we see that those bodies professing to be Christ's people, who refuse to carry out the command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," *soon die*. They die from inaction. God's blessings are withheld from them, because they fail to do their duty. It is the same with churches. A church that will not do anything to sustain the gospel at home and abroad will have its candle stick removed. It will be a failure. The mission of the churches of Jesus Christ in the world is to convert the world, through the preaching of the Gospel of Christ. When any one of them fails to perform its mission, and utterly refuses to do its duty in this respect, the Lord withdraws Himself from it, and its light goes out.

A few Baptist churches were organized in what is now the bounds of the Muscle Shoals Association, in the years 1817-1820, through the labors of Elders John Davis, Theophilous Skinner and others. Elder Davis was the moving power. He had emigrated from Tennessee, and settled near Russellville, Franklin county. He organized what was called the Russell Valley Church, located a few miles east of Russellville. Through his influence the churches organized agreed to meet by delegates and constitute an association. They addressed a

letter to Flint River Association in 1819, and sent Elder Davis as their representative, who met with that association. Elders Willis Hopwood, George Brown and Wm. Edens were sent by that body to aid in constituting the churches into an association. The following churches met by their delegates at Russell Valley Church, July 15, 1820: Russell Valley and Hepzibah Churches, in Franklin county; Bethel, Birdwell's Spring (now Enon), Carmel and Town Creek churches, in Lawrence county; Mill Creek, Butler's Creek and Little Cypress churches in Lauderdale county. Only three of these churches now exist, viz: Bethel, Enon and Town Creek.

According to previous appointment, the brethren from Flint River Association met the delegates of these churches at the time and place above mentioned. A constitution, abstract of faith, and rules of decorum were adopted, and the association was organized under the name of "The Big Bend of Tennessee River Association," which name was afterwards changed to the one it now bears, the Muscle Shoals Association. The first name was taken from the fact that the Tennessee river makes a big bend in its course on the north side of the territory embraced in the association; the second name was from the Muscle Shoals, which commence some twelve or fifteen miles below Decatur, and end a short distance above Florence.

Elder Townes, from whose brief history published in one of the old minutes I get most of the facts concerning the early history of the association, in speaking of the constitution and abstract of faith, says: "They have remained unaltered to this day" (1840). I can say, after a careful examination of all the minutes, that with one exception, the constitution is the same now (1890) as at the beginning, and there has been no change in the abstract of faith.

Perhaps it would be well, right here, for me to give an account of the organization of the churches that were the constituent members of the association.

In the year 1816, Russell Valley began to be settled by the whites. Among these settlers, Elder John Davis, formerly of Georgia, but more recently from Tennessee, an ordained minister, was instrumental in constituting Russell Valley Church, in 1817, on thirty-two members. Elders Bennet Wood and Jennings were the presbytery. Elder Davis was the first pastor. Soon, by the indefatigable labors of her pastor, this church became the mother of several churches. In May, 1818, Town Creek Church was constituted, Elders Davis and Skinner being the presbytery. Elder Abner Smith was called as its pastor. On the third Saturday in May, 1818, Hepzibah Church was constituted by the same presbytery. Solomon Smith and Jeremiah Ward became their supply. Bethel Church was constituted on the second Saturday in July, 1819, Elders Davis and Solomon Smith, the presbytery. Elder Theophilous Skinner was chosen pastor. Carmel Church was constituted on the second Saturday in August, 1819, by Elders Davis, Skinner and Wood, as presbytery. Elder Davis was their supply. Birdwell's Spring (Enon) was constituted on the third Monday in June, 1819, Elders Henry Hodges and Wm. Edens being the presbytery. Stephen Penn was called as pastor. I have no particulars about the constitutions of the three churches in Lauderdale county. These nine churches constituted the first association. I regret that I am not able to give the names of the delegates. A committee consisting of John Davis, Jeremiah Burns, George Brown, Willis Hopwood and Shelton Standifer was appointed to draft a constitution, abstract of faith and rules of decorum,

which, when presented, were adopted (they will be found in another place in this volume).

The number of members of the nine churches that composed this body when organized was 366. We give the closing paragraph of the first circular letter addressed to the churches, which shows that the association only claimed to be an advisory council, and not a legislative body: "And now, brethren, we expect you in future, to eye this body as an advisory council in all things relating to your internal concerns, that you endeavor to fill your place in support of such union, and keep up a close and strict discipline among yourselves, which consists not in uncharitable exercises toward each other, nor in any evil eye over one another to betray them into difficulties, but in brotherly affection; admonishing one another in love and good works; not suffering sin upon your brethren unrepented; remembering always to watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation."

This was good advice and worthy to be considered now by all our churches. The custom of having circular letters printed in the minutes, as they were called, was introduced at this meeting and was kept up for many years. Some brother would be appointed to write upon some particular subject, viz: baptism, communion, faith, etc. He would read this to the association, and it would be printed in the minutes, and was called a circular letter. This served a very good purpose in those days when there were so few books and denominational papers circulated among the people. Now it is unnecessary, because our people can be supplied with books and periodicals, which furnish them with all the information they may need or desire upon almost every question of doctrine or practice.

CHAPTER II.

SESSIONS OF THE ASSOCIATION FROM 1821 TO 1830.

THE second session of the association was held with the Russell Valley Church, commencing Saturday before the fourth Lord's Day, in July, 1821. Elder Jeremiah Burns was chosen moderator and John L. Townes, clerk. Three new churches were received, viz: Spring Hill, in Morgan county, which had been regularly dismissed from the Flint River Association; Salem and Big Cypress, newly constituted churches; Spring Hill Church, which was located four miles west of Decatur, existed for a number of years, and was at one time a flourishing church, but on account of removals and deaths gradually went down and finally dissolved about the time of the Civil War. Salem Church was located a few miles northwest of Moulton. It is still a member of the association. Big Cypress was on the other side of the river, in Lauderdale county. It passed away many years ago. The membership reported at this session was 482, a gain of 116 over that of the previous year.

The association was divided into three districts, and it was decided to hold the session of the body in each of these districts, in regular succession, commencing at number one. The messengers of the district, in which the association was to be held, had the appointment of the time and place. It was resolved further, that a three day's union meeting should be held in each district for the purpose of preaching and communion, and the messengers of the respective districts were to appoint the

times and places for such meetings. It was made the duty of the ministers to attend these meetings. The name of the association was changed at this meeting to "The Muscle Shoals Association of Baptists." The action of the association in appointing district meetings, we think was a good one, and might be made profitable now if practiced. We do not approve of appointing these meetings for communion; this is a church matter and should be attended to by the churches.

The third session of the association was held with the church at Birdwell's Spring, in Lawrence county, commencing on Saturday before the fourth Lord's Day, in July, 1822. Elder Henry Hodges preached the introductory sermon. Elder John Davis was chosen moderator and John L. Townes, clerk. The following newly constituted churches were received, viz: Flint Creek, West Fork of Flint, Pond Creek (now Mt. Pleasant), in Lawrence county; New Hope, in Franklin county; Bethel and Salem, in Morgan county. Of these churches, only Mt. Pleasant Church exists. All the rest have gone down. Salem lived until after the war. It dissolved, and a church called New Salem was constituted near where old Salem was. It is now a member of the association.

We are not able to give the number of members reported. Friday before the first Sabbath in September was set apart as a day of fasting and prayer. The circular letters were discontinued. Very little was done at this session.

The fourth session was held with the Mill Creek Church, Lauderdale county, commencing on Saturday before the fourth Lord's Day, in July, 1823. Elder Jeremiah Burns preached the introductory sermon. Elder John Davis was moderator and John L. Townes clerk. Four newly constituted churches were received, viz: Fork of Butta Hatchie,

Rock Spring and Bethel, in Mississippi, and Concord in Franklin county. None of these churches are now in the association; if they are in existence, we are not aware of it. The association had now twenty-two churches connected with it, and covered an extensive territory. Saturday before the fourth Lord's Day in October was set apart as a day of fasting and prayer.

The following resolution was adopted: "Resolved, that the association appoint at least two ministers on each side of the Tennessee river, for the purpose of traveling and visiting the destitute churches and places within the limits of this association for one year, and that the association advise and recommend the churches to aid such ministers by liberal pecuniary contributions, and signify their approbation or disapprobation of this arrangement to the next association in their letters." Elders Ward and Barker were appointed to preach on the south side of the river, and Elder Genard and Harden on the north side. This resolution evidently shows that the body, at that time wanted to do missionary work. If it had gone on, without asking for the approbation of the churches, probably there would have been very little trouble on this question. It would have been taken for granted by the churches that this was a legitimate part of the work of the association, and they would have sustained it, at least a greater part of them would have done so.

The association renewed the practice of having circular letters read and printed in the minutes.

The fifth session was held with the church at the West Fork of Town Creek,* in 1824. Elder Genard preached the introductory sermon, Elder Jeremiah Burns was the

* There is no account given in the minutes of the reception of this church, but we suppose it was received at the second or third session. It dissolved in 1839.

moderator and John L. Townes, clerk. Two newly constituted churches were received, viz: Cedar Spring, now Mt. Pisgah, in Morgan county, and Macedonia, Franklin county. At this association, the churches north of Tennessee river, on account of the inconvenience of attending, petitioned for dismissal, which was granted. The missionaries appointed at the last meeting reported and presented their journals, from which it appeared much good had been done, but a majority of the churches, in their letters expressed their disapprobation of the plan. The missionary work was, therefore, discontinued. We see from this, that though there was a strong missionary spirit among the brethren in those early days, yet there was a strong opposition to missionary work, which, after many years, culminated in the withdrawal of the anti-missionary party from the association. The missionary element, which, at this time was weak, in a few years became strong enough to carry through their plans for having the gospel preached in all destitute places in the association.

The following resolution was adopted with reference to the death of the Elder Jeremiah Ward: "Resolved, that we deeply deplore the loss of our beloved brother, Jeremiah Ward, and that we make this public manifestation of grief as the only tribute of respect which is left in our power to pay him, who was so dear to us, and so eminently useful as a preacher." We have not been able to gather any information concerning Elder Ward, save that which we glean from the old minutes. He was pastor of Hepzibah Church just after its organization, in conjunction with Solomon Smith. He was one of the pioneer preachers in north Alabama.

The sixth session was held at Spring Hill Church, Morgan county, on Saturday before the fourth Lord's Day,

in July, 1825. Elder Jeremiah Burns preached the introductory sermon. He was also chosen moderator, with John L. Townes, as clerk. Two new churches were received, viz: Mt. Nebo, in Franklin county, and Hopewell, in Morgan county. The association was divided into two districts at this meeting.

The seventh session was held with Mt. Nebo Church, Franklin county, commencing on Saturday before the fourth Lord's Day, in July, 1826. Twenty-two churches were represented. Elder Jeremiah Burns was moderator and John L. Townes, clerk. Elder Townes preached the introductory sermon. One new church was received, viz: Mallard's Creek, which was located several miles northeast of where Hillsboro now is. Three churches were dismissed at their request, to form a new association, namely, New Hope and Bethel, in Mississippi, and Macedonia, in Alabama.

The eighth session was held at Town Creek Church, Lawrence county, commencing on Saturday before the fourth Lord's Day, in July, 1827. Elder Jeremiah Burns preached the introductory sermon. He was also the moderator and Elder J. L. Townes, clerk. Two new churches were received, viz: Courtland and La Grange. One church, Bethel, in Morgan, was reported as dissolved, corresponding letters were received from Cahaba, Elk River, Shoal Creek, Richland and Mt. Zion Associations. A circular letter on close communion was read by Elder John L. Townes, and ordered to be printed in the minutes. From the views set forth in this circular, we find that there has been no change of opinion among Baptists upon the subject of communion, from that time until the present. We hold to the same doctrines now that the Baptists held then.

Elder Townes, argued in this circular letter, that the

Lord's Supper is an ordinance belonging to the Church of Christ, that it cannot be carried out of the church, that there is a preparation necessary to constitute one a member of the church; that this preparation consists, first, in repentance; second, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; third, regeneration; fourth, baptism as an evidence of the influence of this preparation. The author then shows that baptism, according to the scriptures, is the immersion of the subject in water, and that nothing else can be considered baptism; consequently, only those who have been immersed have any right to partake of the communion, because it is a church ordinance, and church members alone have this privilege. Baptism is necessary to church membership, and immersion is baptism.

The circular is well written, and is a fair exposition of Baptist views upon this subject.

At this meeting the association was divided into three districts, and union meetings were appointed for each district. The following preamble and resolution was unanimously adopted: "This association viewing with deep regret the languid state of religion in most of the churches composing this body, which calls aloud to us to humble ourselves before the Lord; therefore, resolved, that Friday before the first Lord's Day, in May next, be set apart as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer to Almighty God, and that the churches composing this body do on that day, meet at their respective places of worship, and that the brethren, who own servants do release them from labor on that day, and carry them and their wives and their little ones to engage in the worship of the Most High." The number of communicants reported was 798. The number of baptisms during the year was fifty-seven.

The ninth session was held with Carmel Church, commencing on Saturday before the fourth Lord's Day, in July, 1828. The introductory sermon was preached by Elder J. L. Townes. Twenty churches were represented. Elder Jeremiah Burns was moderator and J. L. Townes, clerk. Shiloh Church, in Morgan county, which had been regularly dismissed from Flint River Association, was received. The association recommended to the churches, "that they appoint two messengers to attend each union meeting which appointment shall be signified by letter from the churches to the brethren assembled;" and it also advised the churches, "to act with extreme caution in receiving members on letters, when they apply for membership into churches at a distance from their neighborhood, and have a church near the place of their residence, and when any application of this kind is made, we advise strict inquiry to be made into the motive which produced the desire to change their membership." "On motion it was agreed, that we recommend to the churches the expediency of annually sending by their messengers a sum to defray the expenses of their messengers to corresponding associations." This was a good suggestion and it would be well for our churches to act upon it now, at least so far as sending up enough to pay the expenses of two or more delegates to the State convention.

The tenth annual session was held with the Hopewell Church, commencing on Saturday before the fourth Lord's Day, in September, 1829. Elder Daniel P. Bestor preached the introductory sermon. Twenty-two churches were represented. Elder Jeremiah Burns was moderator and Elder John L. Townes, clerk.

Many churches complained, in their letters, of their destitute situation in not having ministers to supply them with the preached word. The association entered into

an organized method to supply this destitution, by a call upon all the churches to say what they would contribute, or to form societies of individual members, if the churches would not act. A standing committee was appointed to attend to this business, who should meet delegates from the churches, or societies, and send ministers to the destitute churches, by a regular itineracy. This effort continued but a short time, as the churches did not approve the method. From this we see, that the anti-missionary spirit was still too strong for the friends of missions to accomplish anything. The majority of the churches were opposed to any missionary effort, and rejected every proposition that favored it. The agitation of the subject produced divisions and bad feelings in the churches.

The eleventh session was held with the Hepzibah Church in 1830. The introductory sermon was preached by Elder Joseph Lane. Elder Burns, who had been moderator for several years, having declined the position, Elder Henry Hodges was chosen moderator, and Elder Joseph Lane, clerk, Elder J. L. Townes, who had been clerk since the second session of the association declined that position. One newly constituted church was received, viz: Friendship. The following recommendations were made to the churches—we think it would be well for our churches *now*, to bear them in mind:

“The association recommends to all the churches strict adherence to the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the practice of the Apostles. As Baptists who are immersed, they should always bear in mind, that they should always approach the Lord’s table only with those who are immersed. It being the Lord’s table, it is sacred, and as immersed followers of the Lord first sat around it, we should never sit around it until we are immersed, and if we should not commune at the Lord’s table till we are

immersed and qualified by a change of heart, and immersion in water, we should not sit there with any who are not thus qualified. We, therefore, advise churches to adhere strictly to the apostolic mode, and not sit at the Lord's table with the unbaptized. However much we may love them either as relatives in the flesh, or as Christians, by a change of heart, they are still unbaptized, and if any members, through tenderness, violate apostolic rectitude, admonish and reprove them in love, and try to reclaim them, but if they still violate apostolic order, let them go with the unbaptized ; better to lose a right hand, or a right eye, than depart from the faith once delivered to the saints. Adhere strictly to close communion."

The association placed upon record the following resolution upon the subject of Campbellism, which was then agitating the churches, and making some inroads upon them :

"Through Campbellism we see the divine operation of the Holy Spirit either disavowed, or so obscurely avowed, as to amount to a disavowal. We see experimental religion (that which Baptists ever cling to) ridiculed and reprobated. We see the apostolic mode of ordaining ministers, by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, ridiculed and condemned. We therein see baptism presented as producing a change of heart and the pardon of sins, when the Holy Spirit can alone produce and bring about a change, while baptism shows our faith, satisfies our conscience, adopts us into His Church, and makes us one with him, by thus fulfilling all righteousness, a change of heart being previously effected by the Holy Spirit. We therein see, as we awfully fear, an effort made by man to pull down the old order of faith and practice taught by the Lord and His Apostles, and establish on their ruins a new order and a new name, styled Campbell-

ism." A protest was also made against Mr. Campbell's new translation of the New Testament. Mr. Campbell had once been a Presbyterian. He became a Baptist, but soon began to preach his new doctrines, which were antagonistic to the generally received doctrines of Baptists. He, with Baptists, rejected infant baptism and received only immersion as Christian baptism, but he ascribed to the ordinance of baptism a virtue or efficacy which Baptists repudiated. He rejected the doctrine of regeneration and the work of the Holy Spirit in producing it, as Baptists understood it. He soon gained many followers and disrupted many Baptist churches, especially in Virginia and Kentucky. This doctrine was beginning to be preached in north Alabama at this time, hence the above declaration upon the part of the Muscle Shoals Association.

The first Saturday in November was set apart as a day of fasting and prayer, and the churches throughout the association were called on to humble themselves before Almighty God, and beg a continuance of spiritual and temporal blessings. The brethren in those days seem to have thought more of the importance of fasting and prayer than they do now.

CHAPTER III.

SESSIONS FROM 1831 TO 1840.

THE twelfth annual session of the association convened at Mt. Pleasant Church, Lawrence county, on Saturday before the fourth Lord's Day, in September, 1831. Twenty-two churches were represented. Elder Jeremiah Burns was moderator and Elisha Meredith, clerk. The death of Elder Bennet Wood was announced, and the following resolution was adopted: "Resolved, that we notice with feelings of the deepest regret the death of our well beloved brother, Elder Bennet Wood, who departed this life May 15, 1831. We, with his bereaved family and neighbors, sensibly feel that dispensation which has summoned him from us, yet we doubt not our loss is his gain." The following resolution was also adopted at this meeting: "Resolved, that the different churches composing this body be requested to express their opinion upon the subject of missionary societies, in their letters to the next association." There was a strong minority in the association led by such men as J. L. Townes, Wm. Leigh, Jeremiah Burns, Thomas Ashford and others, who desired the association to engage in active missionary work, and if they could not get the association nor the churches to engage in it, they proposed to have missionary societies outside of the churches, but they did not wish to do this in opposition to the wishes of the churches. They did not wish to have a split in the association, believing that ultimately the churches would get

right. They worked faithfully to accomplish their object. After a while, success rewarded their efforts.

The thirteenth session was held with Salem Church, commencing Saturday before the fourth Lord's Day, in September, 1832. Twenty-three churches were represented. One new church was received, Day's Creek. Elder Abner Smith was moderator and Elisha Meredith, clerk. The association passed unanimously the following resolution with reference to the death of Elder John Davis, who died on the ninth of October, 1831:

"Resolved, that this association notice with feelings of the deepest regret, the death of our well beloved brother, Elder John Davis. We, with his family and neighbors, feel that dispensation which has removed him from us."

Elder Davis might be said to have been the founder of the association. He was instrumental in building up many of the churches that first formed the association. He was a pioneer among the Baptists of this section. We give in another place in this volume a sketch of Elder Davis's Life, which was written by Elder John L. Townes, who knew him well, and was published in the minutes of the association of 1844.

This body had also to deplore the death of Elder George Russell, a member of the West Fork of Town Creek Church. A resolution of condolence was adopted concerning his death.

The following resolution on the subject of missionaries was proposed to the association, but was rejected; it was ordered, however, to be entered upon the minutes: "Resolved, that this association in its associated capacity will not directly or indirectly have any correspondence with any missionary society, either foreign or domestic, or any other missionary board of any description, as we are of the opinion that these matters do not belong to the

association, but have a tendency to confuse our deliberations." We see from this that there were some who wished the association to take a decided stand in opposition to the missionary enterprise. There were others, however, who were strong friends of missions, and, though they were not able to get the association to adopt their broad and enlightened views, yet their influence was strong enough to keep the body from taking a decided stand against the promulgation of the gospel by missionary effort. The resolution was voted down, but in compliance with the wish of its advocates, we suppose, it was ordered to be printed in the minutes. There seems to have been no response from the churches on the subject of missionary societies, as requested at the last session, at least we find no mention of it in the minutes.

The fourteenth session was held at Town Creek Church, commencing on Saturday before the fourth Lord's Day, in September, 1833. Twenty-four churches were represented. Russellville Church, newly constituted, was received. Elder Abner Smith was moderator and Elisha Meredith, clerk. Nothing of importance occurred at this meeting.

The fifteenth annual session was held at Mt. Pisgah Church, Morgan county, in September, 1834. Twenty-five churches were represented. One newly constituted church, Spring Creek, was received. Elder J. L. Townes was moderator and Elder Wm. Lucas, clerk. The total number of communicants reported was 1410. The baptisms reported were fifty-five. At this meeting many churches complained of some irregularities which were creeping into the churches, and which had a tendency to disturb the harmony of the association. A committee was appointed to investigate and report on the matters complained of. The committee reported and recom-

mended the following advice to be given to the churches, which was concurred in by the body:

“First, As regards the duty of churches which may have in their communion persons who are tainted with the doctrine of Campbellism, that the church labor, in a gospel way, first by a committee of brethren, then by the church in the aggregate. If this course does not reclaim the member, then cast him off from their fellowship.

“Second, In relation to Baptist ministers in our fellowship baptizing persons, without a view upon being baptized of becoming members in the fellowship of our churches, is of very doubtful authority, and in reference to the practice, we feel no hesitation in saying that it is inexpedient, and we would, as an association, and you should, as churches, in the spirit of meekness and love, pray your brethren, in the ministry for the future, to desist from such a course in the administration of that ordinance.

“Third, In the third place, in regard to suffering your members to commune with Pedo-Baptist churches, we believe it unauthorized by the laws of Christ's Kingdom, and we would advise you, in the first place, to labor with them as the gospel requires in other cases of disorder; if then, the offender is not reclaimed by the labor of a committee, nor by the church, cut him off.”

Messengers were in attendance at this meeting from three associations, viz : Mt. Zion, William Case ; from Flint River, Jeremiah Tucker and George Tucker ; from Shoal Creek, Joshua Hardin.

A circular letter was read by Elder J. L. Townes, upon “The Duties of Church Members.”

The sixteenth session was held with the Enon Church, Lawrence county, commencing on Friday before the fourth Lord's Day, in September, 1835. Twenty-five

churches were represented. Elder J. L. Townes was moderator and Wm. Lucas, clerk.

Many of the churches complained of coldness and apathy, and the association was requested to devise some means by which ministerial help could be obtained. A committee appointed to consider the request, reported as follows:

“First, That this association do appoint a time and place to hold a minister’s meeting, and that all the ministers and deacons who belong to the churches be requested to attend the same, and that some one of the ministers be appointed to preach the introductory sermon on the duties of ministers, deacons and other members of the churches. And we recommend that the meeting be held at Mt. Gibson Meeting House, on Saturday before the second Lord’s Day, in November next, and continue three days, or as long as circumstances may justify.

“Second, That all the churches be requested to hold a day of fasting and prayer on the day the minister’s meeting commences, and that the brethren attend at their meeting houses and join one another in prayer, and that they do especially pray the God of the harvest to send more laborers into the field, and that He will pour out His Spirit upon the people, and revive His work among us, and enable both ministers and people to see eye to eye, and be of one mind.

“Third, We recommend the churches to attend to the temporal wants of their pastors or ministers who may supply them, and that they always have a church fund by them.”

The death of Elder W. E. Dupree was announced and suitable resolutions were adopted concerning the same. The ministers’ and deacons’ meetings were held for a short time, but were soon discontinued.

The seventeenth session was held with the Mt. Nebo Church, Franklin county, commencing on Friday before the fourth Lord's Day, in September, 1836. Only twelve churches were represented; why so few churches were represented we are not informed. Elder J. L. Townes was moderator and Wm. Lucas, clerk. Many of the churches again requested the association to devise some means by which they might be supplied with ministerial aid. A committee was appointed to take the matter into consideration, who reported as follows: "First, that there are but few ministers within our bounds. Second, that the association has no control over these few. We would, therefore, advise these churches to seek out, and call such preachers as will be acceptable among them, and when they obtain their consent, locate them, and give them a decent support, and thus enable them to give themselves wholly to the work, and see that they do it."

This was good advice, and had the churches acted upon it, we would not *now* be so destitute of ministers who are fully engaged in the work of preaching the gospel. We have plenty of ministers, but their hands are tied. They have to go to some secular employment to make a living for themselves and their families. The churches do not support their ministers, and the result is, they do not grow as they would, if their pastors could devote more time to them.

The death of Elder James Edens was announced. He was a faithful and acceptable minister. He had been pastor of Mt. Pisgah Church, Morgan county, and lived in the neighborhood of that church when he died. A grandson of his was pastor of the Baptist Church at Gadsen, Ala., a few years ago. He is now in Georgia, and is a very acceptable and useful minister. His name is James Edens also.

It was agreed, "that a member from each union district be appointed to visit the churches of the district, and obtain the history of said churches from the time of their constitution down to the present time (1836) and send the same to Brother Holcombe," who was preparing a history of the Baptist churches of Alabama.

The eighteenth session was held at Hopewell Church, Morgan county, commencing on Friday before the fourth Sabbath in September, 1837. Twenty-three churches were represented. Elder Henry W. Hodges was moderator and George Cleere, clerk. Elder Hodges preached the introductory sermon. Spring Creek Church was reported as dissolved. Very little was done at this meeting. The following query from Liberty Church was proposed: "A person who was baptized by a schismatic preacher, applies for membership with us, but is unwilling to be rebaptized by us, or any properly authorized minister, being satisfied with that received from the schismatic. We desire to be advised, whether to receive him upon that baptism or not." The association advised the church not to receive him without rebaptism by some regularly authorized Baptist minister. There were 918 communicants reported for this year, and ninety-four baptisms. A committee was appointed to examine into the condition of the West Fork of Town Creek Church. Elder W. H. Holcombe was a visitor at this meeting and preached on the Sabbath.

The nineteenth session was held with the Mt. Pleasant Church, Lawrence county, commencing on Friday, before the fourth Lord's Day, in September, 1838. Twenty-one churches were represented. Elder Sylvanus Gibson was chosen moderator and George Cleere, clerk. Elder Gibson preached the introductory sermon. Brethren Aaron Askew and Z. Ellis were present as correspondents

from Shoal Creek Association, and Elder W. H. Holcombe from Flint River. The committee appointed to examine into the condition of the West Fork of Town Creek Church reported that they thought it advisable for that church to be dissolved. The report was adopted and the church was dissolved, and the members lettered out. We suppose this was done by a committee, appointed for that purpose. Friday before the first Sabbath in March, 1839, was appointed as a day of fasting and prayer, and the churches were requested "to assemble at their houses of worship, with their wives, children and servants, and devoutly implore God to increase vital and pure religion amongst us, and especially pray the Lord of the harvest to send more laborers into His Vineyard."

The number of communicants reported at this meeting was 1340, and the number of baptisms 216.

The twentieth annual session was held with the Russell Valley Church, commencing on Friday before the fourth Lord's Day in September, 1839. Twenty-five churches were represented, Elder Sylvanus Gibson was moderator and Elder Wm. Leigh, clerk. Elder John L. Townes preached the introductory sermon. Three new churches were received, viz: Cane Creek, Mudd Creek and Little Bear Creek. Brother Michael Beaver was received as a correspondent from Big Hatchie Association, in West Tennessee, Brother Leonard Milligan was received from Liberty. A letter was received from Flint River Association by the hands of Brother Wm. Crutcher, in which it was stated, that difficulties existed in that body and the letter referred this association to a resolution, embodied in her letter, as the cause of the difficulties. The following is the resolution: "Resolved, therefore, by this association, that she declares non-fellowship with the missionary society, and its auxiliaries, together with all

and every person joined with or in any way connected to any of those institutions, and that all those churches, minorities or parts of churches or otherwise within her chartered limits, who shall adhere to the principles of their constitution in connection with the association, will be regarded by her as members of her body and that she will sustain and defend all those rights and privileges secured to them by their respective church covenants, so far as an associational compact is concerned." This was the famous, in that day, *non-fellowship* resolution.

The battle between the missionary party and the anti-missionary party had been going on in the Flint River Association, as it had been going on in the Muscle Shoals, for many years. The anti-missionary party, finally, being the stronger, determined to drive off the missionaries, or make them stop their efforts; hence the passage of this resolution. It had the effect, which perhaps they expected, to cause the churches which sympathized with the missionary spirit, to leave the association and form a new one—Liberty, on a missionary basis. The association took under consideration the above resolution and adopted the following: "Resolved by this association, that inasmuch as she cannot favor such principles as set forth in the foregoing resolution, adopted by the Flint River Association, that she will decline corresponding with her, so long as she may continue to adhere to such principles." It was also agreed that a letter be written to Flint River Association, setting forth the reasons for a discontinuance of correspondence. Elder Townes was appointed to write the letter. Elder Wm. Crutcher, as a minister and a visiting brother, was then invited to a seat, which invitation he accepted. Thus we see, that the association,

although it had not heartily entered into missionary work, was not prepared to indorse or even countenance the extreme views of the majority of the Flint River Association. The leaven of missionary spirit was at work, and as we shall see, finally gained the ascendancy. Brethren Townes, Leigh, Ashford and others were the firm friends of the missionary enterprise, and they took every opportunity to impress their views upon the minds of their brethren. They had a difficult task, but they persevered and accomplished their object. Every year they were joined by others, who aided them no little. Such extreme measures as those taken by the anti-missionary party in Flint River Association worked in their favor. Brethren, who were disposed for the sake of peace in these churches to remain silent, were forced to take a stand. Flint River Association was rent in twain by the adoption of the non-fellowship resolution. Liberty Association was formed by those churches that would not submit to the action of the association. The old association has passed away among the things that were, or if it exists, it is so small and insignificant, that it is not known to the outside world. The Liberty is an active missionary body and has been for years.

The death of Elder James Fargison was announced in the letter of the Hopewell Church. The number of communicants reported this year was 1811; baptism, 469; contributions for minutes, \$57.50.

The twenty-first session was held with Spring Hill Church, Morgan county, commencing Friday before the fourth Lord's Day, in September, 1840. Elder S. Gibson was moderator and Brother A. L. Stovall, clerk. Elder John Leigh preached the introductory sermon. Twenty-two churches were represented. Brethren Beemer and

Wright were received as correspondents from Liberty Association.

The time of holding the association was changed to Friday before the the second Lord's Day in October of each year. Carmel Church sent up the following inquiry: "Is this association a missionary or an anti-missionary body?" The association returned the following answer: "That as an association, this body is neither missionary nor anti-missionary, but an advisory council, adhering strictly to the principles of the constitution to which we refer our brethren generally."

We certainly cannot admire the position of the association at this time. It was endeavoring to steer between opposing forces that were at work in the churches. One urging the duty of missionary effort, and the other opposed to all missionary enterprises. These two forces had been opposing each other for twenty years. The anti-missionaries had managed to check every effort that was made to induce the association to enter upon missionary work up to this time. The brethren and churches that were disposed to engage in this work were chaffing under the restraints thrown around them, but for the sake of harmony and union they continued with the association, hoping that it would see its duty after a while and come out boldly on the missionary platform. This question of Carmel Church was intended to put the brethren to thinking. The association had at its last session withdrawn correspondence from Flint River Association, on account of its non-fellowship resolutions, thus indicating that she did not approve of the anti-missionary spirit of that association. If she was not anti-missionary, what was she? She encouraged no missionary work, she did no work of that kind. She must take a

stand one way or the other. Neutrality will do no longer. The missionary spirit is abroad among the churches. They will not be prevented much longer from taking the matter in their own hands and acting independently of the association.

The total number of communicants reported this year was 2136; baptisms, 517; contributed for minutes, \$53.75.

CHAPTER IV.

SESSIONS FROM 1841 TO 1846. THE ASSOCIATION TAKES ITS STAND FOR MISSIONARY EFFORT.

THE twenty-second session was held with the Salem Church, Lawrence county, commencing on Friday before the second Lord's Day, in October, 1841. Twenty-eight churches were represented. The introductory sermon was preached by Elder Theophilous Skinner. Elder Gibson was moderator and A. L. Stovall, clerk. Three new churches were received, viz: Harmony, in Franklin county; Harmony, in Lawrence; and Liberty Spring, in Franklin. Brother Claiborn Wright was received as a messenger from Liberty Association. The death of Elder Elexious Thompson, of Salem Church, was announced, and appropriate resolutions concerning him were adopted. Elder Townes read a circular letter in which he gave a history of the association from its organization up to 1840. It is to this circular we are indebted for many of the facts which we have given so far in this history. We have been able to find very few of the early minutes, hence we have followed Brother Townes. The total number of members reported this year was 2264; baptisms, 201; contributions, \$46.06.

The twenty-third session was held with Cane Creek Church, commencing on Friday before first Lord's Day, in October, 1842. Elder S. Gibson preached the introductory sermon. Twenty-seven churches were represented. Elder S. Gibson was moderator and Elder A. L. Stovall, clerk. Two new churches were received, viz:

Cedar Creek and Good Hope. A presbytery consisting of Elders Wm. Leigh and J. L. Townes was appointed to dissolve La Grange Church. Brothers Townes and Gage were appointed a presbytery to dissolve Mallard's Creek Church. These two churches were so weak that they were not able to keep up their organization. The object of the presbytery was to letter out the members so that they might join other churches.

Mud Creek and Harmony Churches, in Franklin county, asked for letters of dismission, which was granted. Antioch Church was cut off from the association for disorderly conduct. The following resolution was adopted: "Resolved, that this association declares non-fellowship with Thomas Jones, who assumes to be pastor of Antioch Church. We also advise the churches not to recognize said Jones as a Baptist preacher." The death of Elder Josiah Barker was announced, and appropriate resolutions adopted. Total membership reported this year, 2300; baptisms, 322; contributions, \$56.05.

The twenty-fourth session was held with the Hopewell Church, Morgan county, commencing Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1843. Elder A. L. Stovall preached the introductory sermon. Twenty-seven churches were represented. Elder S. Gibson was moderator and A. L. Stovall, clerk. Two new churches were received, Harmony, in Morgan county, and Macedonia, in Franklin. The churches at La Grange and Mallard's Creek were reported dissolved. Liberty Spring Church was dismissed at her request. The following resolutions were unanimously adopted: "Resolved, that we advise the churches composing our body, to keep in the hands of the treasurer or deacons a fund to be applied by them, or those whom the church may appoint to make the application, to the support of traveling or visit-

ing preachers, who feel it their duty to leave their homes and go preaching the Gospel of the Son of God to perishing sinners, and confirming the souls of disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith." "Be it further resolved, that we advise and admonish the deacons of each church in our bounds, to study their duty upon this important subject, and stir up their brethren to the discharge of their duty, as enjoined in the New Testament, that their liberalities be in readiness, that thereby the gospel may be supported, and the families of our preaching brethren upheld. We also advise the churches not to neglect their pastors or supplies, but see that they are supported as the gospel directs." There was very little business done at this meeting. Total number of communicants reported was 2507; baptism, 437; contributions, \$53.65, for minutes.

The twenty-fifth session was held with Town Creek Church, Lawrence county, commencing Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1844. Elder John M. Cummings preached the introductory sermon. Elder S. Gibson was moderator and A. L. Stovall, clerk. Thirty churches were represented. Four churches were received, viz: Mt. Moriah, in Franklin county; Pleasant Hill and Shoal Creek, in Morgan county; and Mt. Tabor, in Blount county. Elder J. Seals was received as a corresponding messenger from Liberty Association. It appears from the minutes, that some matter was presented from the Courtland Church, which the association did not wish to indorse, but presume it was something concerning missions, although the record does not show that it was that. A committee, to whom was referred the Courtland letter, made the following report: "We have taken into consideration, and reflected seriously on the consequences of the adoption of its sentiments by the association. We

conclude that it would have a tendency to affect seriously the peace of the churches, and prevent a union of effort, and regarding tenderly the feelings of our brethren who honestly differ in opinion, we recommend the association not to agitate the principle in the association, but form a society, disconnected from the association, to be regulated in every respect by its own wisdom, to accomplish the same object." We must confess that this report does not seem very clear. The committee seems to have been trying to keep the churches from knowing what was proposed. They were extremely *tender* of the feelings of their brethren. We have learned from brethren who were conversant with the facts, and also from the church book of the Courtland Church, something about the matter. The Courtland Church wanted the association to take a positive stand in favor of missionary work, and organize some plan by which the churches could be brought to make contributions for missionary purposes, and have the gospel preached in destitute places in the bounds of the association and elsewhere. Such brethren as Deacons Thomas Ashford and Michael Mays of the Courtland Church, with their pastor, Elder John L. Townes, with Elder Wm. Leigh, were not going to stop their efforts to get the association to enter upon missionary work. Other brethren were also anxious for this to be done. The missionary party had been increasing, and now almost in the majority. Their opponents, however, were strong, and they were supported by others, who, though not opposed to missionary work, yet did not wish the association to enter upon that work, because they thought it would produce trouble in the body, and perhaps rend it in twain, hence these two latter parties were sufficiently strong, when acting together, to vote down any proposition which would make the association an active mission-

ary body. Hence the adoption of the above report, which was a kind of compromise. It committed the association to nothing, yet did not oppose the organization of a missionary society, to accomplish the same object, and do the work which the missionary brethren thought the association ought to do. The brethren followed the suggestion of the committee and organized a missionary society which was called "The Muscle Shoals Home Mission Society." This society met annually at the same time and place as the association. These conservative brethren who were unwilling to take an advance step on the missionary question for fear of offending the anti-missionary party, and driving them away, did the very thing that would, in a very short time, force the association to become a missionary or an anti-missionary body. The meeting of nearly one-half of the members of the association as a missionary society, at the same time and place as the association, could not continue long without friction. Something would be said in one or the other of the bodies that would irritate and produce bad feelings. An influence would be exerted upon the churches that would make them missionary in sentiment, or they would oppose most bitterly the formation of a society, and of the members of the association, and meeting at the same time and place. This would drive the missionary party to organize a new association on missionary principles.

THE TEMPERANCE QUESTION.

The Muscle Shoals Association has ever taken a decided stand in favor of temperance. The following resolution on temperance was adopted at this meeting: "Resolved, that this association recommend to its members and the churches of which it is composed, that they neither make,

nor vend intoxicating drinks, nor use them as a beverage." The circular letter, written by Elder J. L. Townes was a brief history of the churches composing the association. The number of members reported was 3743; baptisms, 232; contributions, \$59.25.

The twenty-sixth session was held with Mt. Nebo Church, Franklin county, commencing on Friday before first Lord's Day, in October, 1845. The introductory sermon was preached by Elder S. Gibson. Thirty-two churches were represented. Elder Gibson was moderator and Elder A. L. Stovall, clerk. Three new churches were received, Hopewell, in Blount county; Bethany and Pleasant Grove, in Morgan county. The death of Elder Theophilous Skinner was announced. Appropriate resolutions were adopted with reference to his death. He was among the first ministers in the organization of the association, a contemporary and fellow worker with Elder John Davis in the establishment of the early churches. He was pastor of Russell Valley Church, Mt. Nebo, and Bethel. We regret that we cannot give a full sketch of his life. We find very little of interest in the minutes of this session. There was no statistical table and hence we can give no report of members.

The twenty-seventh session was held with Mt. Pisgah Church, Morgan county, commencing Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1846. Elder A. L. Stovall preached the introductory sermon. Elder S. Gibson was moderator and A. L. Stovall, clerk. Thirty-four churches were represented. Two new churches were received, Florence and Flint Creek. Bluff Creek Church, in Lauderdale county, was received on a letter from Liberty Association. Elder C. Wright and J. D. Hopper were received as messengers from Liberty Association. A letter was presented from Carmel Church by S. W. Wal-

lace, but the association rejected it, because it was satisfied that the church had not adopted it, and that it did not express the action of the church. At this session the missionary question again came up. "The Muscle Shoals Home Mission Society" had met regularly at the same time and place as the association. It was composed principally of those who were delegates to the association.

This society formulated a plan of missionary work to be carried on by the association, and presented it to the association. It was discussed and the voice of the delegates representing the churches was taken on the question. The vote resulted in sixteen churches in favor of the proposition, and sixteen opposed to it, and four neutral. This action was taken on Saturday of the meeting. The question was then postponed until Monday. On that day the consideration of the question was resumed and, on motion, it was resolved that the association adopt the plan suggested by the mission society and act agreeably thereto. The following was the plan proposed and adopted:

"That each church send by its delegates to the association, its free will offerings, which may be contributed by the members or others, adopting such mode of collection as suits them, leaving the members free to contribute or withhold, as their consciences dictate to them.

"Let each church specify, in its letter, the amounts for minutes and traveling preachers; the association to select such ministering brethren to travel and preach in the bounds of our association, as they may deem worthy, requiring them to keep a regular account of their labors, and of the contributions made to them, and report to the association; the association to award them out of the fund created by the churches as above such compensation

as it may think reasonable for the services rendered; the minutes of the association to contain the reports of each traveling preacher, the amounts contributed by each church, and the amount given by the association to each preacher." Thus we see that the association by the adoption of this plan, suggested by the society, took its position at last on the side of missions. By this action it became a missionary body in name at least. It was not as decided as it might have been but when we consider all the surrounding circumstances, it was as far as the brethren could go then. There was much opposition, and the vote was very close, good brethren honestly thought that the association ought not to have anything to do with missionary work. Some churches withdrew from the association on account of its action, and formed another association on anti-missionary principles, which they called by the same name "Muscle Shoals Association" and claimed that they constituted the original association, and that the missionary brethren were the ones that withdrew. The facts do not sustain the claim, however. The change in the policy of the association, as to whether it would do missionary work or not, was made by a majority and a majority of the churches remained with the missionary party. Some of the churches, though they did not favor the plan at first, retained their connection with the body. The claim of the anti-missionary party, that in the adoption of the above missionary plan, the association had departed from its constitution and the original object of its organization, was not sustained by the history of the association, for we have seen that in the early years of the association it had missionaries at work, and the constitution itself did not in any way prohibit the association from entering upon such work. If it was not organized for the purpose of advancing the

cause of Christ, we are at a loss to know for what it was organized. And we know of no better way to advance Christ's cause, than to have the gospel preached, which was the sum and substance of missionary work. The churches that withdrew, and formed another association have prospered but little. Some of them have dissolved, and the association has dwindled down so very small, that if it is in existence, it is scarcely known. We believe that there are a few churches of the anti-missionary order within the bounds of this association.

The death of Elder John L. Townes was announced at this meeting, and the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted :

“Whereas, the painful intelligence of the death of our dearly beloved brother, Elder John L. Townes, who departed this life on the 28th of July, 1846, has been announced to this body, and whereas, we feel that an able minister and an exemplary Christian has been called from his labors amongst us, to receive the crown of life, which the Lord, the righteous judge, hath prepared for him—

“Resolved, that we, as an association, condoling with churches which have so long enjoyed his pastoral care and oversight, as well as for the loss which we have all sustained in this bereavement, as also, for the Christian community in general, and his family, do take this opportunity to express our deep and unfeigned sorrow for the event, which has overwhelmed the churches with grief ; yet in the midst of our sorrow, we have the consolation to feel, and know that our loss is his gain.

“Resolved, that as ripe for immortality and the joys of heaven, he has gone home to receive the Christian's reward of his long and faithful services in his Master's Vineyard, and we, therefore, with humble resignation to the

will of our Heavenly Father, present this testimonial of our love for our departed brother.”

A sketch of this brother's life will be found in another place. It was prepared by Elder Wm. Leigh, his friend and neighbor.

Elders Joseph Vincent and P. M. Musgrove were appointed missionaries by the association, to travel and preach during the associational year. Deacon M. W. Mays was chosen treasurer of the association. Elder John M. Cummings wrote the circular letter upon the subject of missions. It was a well written paper and very clearly proved that the church of Christ was a missionary body. The number of communicants reported was 2958; baptisms, 124, contributions, \$55.95.

CHAPTER V.

FROM 1847 TO 1856. THE ASSOCIATION A MISSIONARY BODY.

THE twenty-eighth session was held with Mt. Pleasant Church, Lawrence county, commencing on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1847. Elder Wm. Irwin preached the introductory sermon. Twenty-eight churches were represented. Eleven churches that had previously been represented did not send either delegates or letters. The majority of these churches were displeased with the action of the association at its last session upon the missionary question. Three new churches were received, viz: Lebanon and Decatur, in Morgan county, and Tharp's Spring, in Franklin county. Elder S. Gibson was moderator and A. L. Stovall, clerk. Elders R. B. C. Howell, J. C. Holt and J. R. Graves, of Tennessee, were present at this meeting. A correspondence was opened with the General Association of Tennessee, and messengers were appointed to attend the next meeting of that body. The death of Elder J. M. Cummings was announced, and a committee appointed to prepare suitable resolutions expressive of the sense of this body concerning the deceased brother. The association at this meeting took great interest in the spiritual welfare of the blacks. We give the action of the body, which does not sustain the statements made by some persons, that the Christians of the South never cared for the spiritual wellbeing of the negroes. So far as our information extends, the Baptists of the South have

always felt a lively interest in the moral and religious improvement of this race, and they have done much towards giving them the gospel. We believe this to be true, also, of other denominations. We may not have done as much as we ought to have done, yet we have not been altogether remiss. The following was the report of the committee on the Religious Instruction of the Blacks: "Your committee feel that they cannot too earnestly recommend the utmost attention on the part of the ministers, churches and Christian owners, to the religious improvement of their servants—to ministers, both pastors and evangelists, to permit no available opportunity of special instruction to the negro to pass unimproved, and whenever practicable and prudent, that a discourse especially to the colored portion of the congregation be delivered immediately upon the close of the general preaching on the Lord's Day. And, as the command of the Great Master to every true minister of the gospel is to go, and as he goes, to preach, your committee think it very appropriate, that the preacher, when on his journey he calls to share the hospitality of a Christian family for the night, to call together, by the permission, and in the presence of the master, those that serve, and by whose toil he is made comfortable, and tell them of the better land, where the weary are at rest." The committee also recommended that suitable provision be made for their accommodation to attend upon public worship. This report had been adopted by the Choctaw Baptist Association of Mississippi, and as it expressed the views of the committee appointed to make a report they reported it, and it was adopted. An executive committee was appointed to carry on the missionary operations of the association. This committee consisted of the following brethren: John W. King, Thomas Ashford, M. W. Mays,

L. D. Massengale, F. C. Owen, Charles Gibson and Samuel K. Oats. Elders Wm. Irwin and P. M. Musgrove were appointed missionaries for the next year. The following query was submitted to the association: "Is it scriptural for Baptist Churches to receive as members those who have been immersed by any other than regularly authorized Baptist ministers?" A committee consisting of Elders S. Gibson, R. B. Burleson, A. L. Stovall and brethren Thomas Ashford, M. W. Mays, F. C. Owen, L. D. Massengale and Dr. J. W. King, was appointed to consider the query and report at the next association.

The following resolution was adopted as expressive of the feelings of the association towards those churches that had not sent delegates to this meeting, on account of the action of the last association on the missionary question:

"Whereas, this association has learned that the brethren of some of the churches in union with us are hurt with the association on account of its action at its last session (missionary), resolved, therefore, that we hereby inform them that we had no design to injure their feelings, but our action proceeded from a conscientious desire to do our duty, and we hope our brethren will so interpret our action, continue in union with us, and represent themselves in our next association."

The churches were urged to sustain their ministers, and to be more liberal in their donations to sustain the gospel. The circular letter this year was written by Elder R. B. Burleson, and in it was discussed the subject of sanctification. The following is a synopsis of it: "The work of sanctification is ascribed to all the persons of the Holy Trinity—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. First, it is through the atonement of Christ; second, through the Word of God. Sanctification is the privilege and

duty of the followers of Christ. It leads, first, to mortification of sin; second, to holiness in feelings and actions; third, it prepares the saints for the service of God. The *means* of sanctification are: First, reading and meditating on God's Holy Word; second, attendance on the public worship of God's House; third, fervent prayer to God; fourth, religious conversation; fifth, by daily studying the character of Christ, our example.

The number of communicants reported this year was 2447; baptisms, 163; contributions for missions, \$342.22; for minutes, \$48.50.

The twenty-ninth session was held at Tuscumbia, commencing on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1848. Elder A. L. Stovall preached the introductory sermon. Thirty-three churches were represented, Elder S. Gibson was moderator and Elder A. L. Stovall, clerk. Correspondents were received from Liberty and Big Bear Creek Associations. The committee appointed at the last session to answer the query on the "proper administrator of baptism," reported. After considerable discussion, the following resolution was adopted:

"This association having considered the query on re-baptism presented in 1847, 'Is it scriptural for Baptist churches to receive as members, those who have been immersed by any other than regularly authorized Baptist ministers,' would advise the churches and brethren composing the association to be governed on these, and all other matters of faith and practice, by the scriptures, which were given by inspiration of God, and which are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, and would also refer them to the last clause in our abstract of principles, which is still the opinion of this association." The last clause alluded to, as found in the minutes of 1839, is as follows:

“No ministers have a right to the administration of the ordinances, but such as are regularly baptized, called, and come under the imposition of the hands by the presbytery.” We see from this, that no baptism was considered valid unless performed by one who had been regularly baptized himself. This, we think, is still the opinion of the association, and we may say that it is the opinion of the great mass of Baptists. There are some Baptists who believe in receiving what are called “alien immersions,” *i. e.*, immersions by other denominations, but the number is small. Baptism, to be scriptural, must be scripturally administered; that is, there must be a scriptural subject, a believer; a scriptural administrator, one authorized by a church of baptized believers to administer the ordinance, and who has been regularly ordained; and it must be the immersion of the subject in water, in the name of the Holy Trinity, *i. e.*, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The scriptures are plain upon this subject: “He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16). “If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest,” that is, be baptized. See Acts 8:37. The administrator, according to the New Testament, was one who was a member of the church, and consequently had been baptized, for none others were members.

At this association, a fund was raised for the support of young ministers at Union University, Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Brother E. D. Stephenson and a Brother Johnson were the young ministers. The sum raised was \$251.

Delegates were appointed to the Southern Baptist convention, which was to meet at Nashville, Tennessee, the following year. The report of the missionaries appointed at the last association showed that considerable work had been done by them. The association was divided into

three districts, and missionaries appointed for each one. The total number of members reported was 2712; baptisms, 215; contributions for missions, \$311.25; minutes, \$50.50.

The thirtieth session was held with the Church at Hopewell, Morgan county; commencing Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1849. Elder John H. Edmiston preached the introductory sermon. Thirty-five churches were represented, Elder S. Gibson was moderator and A. L. Stovall, clerk. Two new churches were received, Moulton and Brown's Valley. Brother James R. Alexander was received as a messenger from Liberty Association, and Elder W. S. Perry from the General Association of Middle Tennessee and North Alabama. The Muscle Shoals and Liberty Associations had united with the General Association of Middle Tennessee and the name had been changed to the General Association of Middle Tennessee and North Alabama.

Harmony Grove Church presented the following query: "Would it be proper for a church to pass a rule to consider any member who should get drunk, excluded?" The association advised the church to pursue the usual course of dealing with such disorderly members. Elder J. C. Vincent was appointed a missionary for the next year. Elders George D. Russell and John W. Miller were appointed missionaries for five months. Brothers Gibson, Lucas, Woodland, Edmiston, Caigle and Morrow agreed to preach as missionaries within the bounds of the association, one month each, without charge. The executive committee was authorized to superintend the missionary operations. This committee was composed of the following brethren: Thomas Ashford, chairman; Franklin C. Owen, secretary; Amos Jarmon, Charles Gibson, Michael W. Mays, Lewis D. Massengale and Dr. Aaron A. Bur-

leson. A subscription of \$50 was taken up to sustain Brother Johnson, a young minister, at Union University.

Resolutions commending the University, the Tennessee Baptist Publication Society, and the *Tennessee Baptist*, a paper published at Nashville, Tennessee, and edited by Elders R. B. C. Howell and J. R. Graves, to the patronage of Baptists, were adopted. A resolution was also adopted, endorsing the action of the General Association in making an effort to locate ministers in the most important towns of middle Tennessee and north Alabama.

As we have stated above, the association had connected itself with the General Association of Middle Tennessee, which had changed its name by adding north Alabama to it. It had under its patronage Union University, at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, of which Dr. Joseph H. Eaton was president. There were then no railroads connecting north Alabama with south Alabama, and under the circumstances, it seems the wisest course to pursue was for the north Alabama churches to co-operate with the churches in middle Tennessee. The Baptists of south Alabama had their State convention, but it was very inconvenient for brethren in this part of the State to attend it. A union with middle Tennessee; as things were then, would be productive of more good. The deaths of Elder A. B. Gilbert and Brother John Fowler were announced, and resolutions of condolence adopted. Brother Gilbert died on the 18th of August, 1849. He was a zealous and faithful minister of the gospel and a member of Bluff Creek Church, Lauderdale county. We regret that we cannot give a sketch of his life. Brother Fowler died on the 6th of March, 1849. He was an aged brother, much devoted to the cause of his master, and a member of Mt. Tabor Church, Blount county.

The contributions for missions this year were \$312.67;

for minutes, \$54.45 ; for widows and orphans of deceased ministers, \$28.95 ; total number of members, 2980 ; baptisms, 375.

The thirty-first session was held with Moulton Church, commencing on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1850. Thirty-six churches were represented. Four new churches were received, viz: Russellville, Okalona, Spout Spring and Antioch. Carmel was reported dissolved. Elder S. Gibson preached the introductory sermon. He was also the moderator and A. L. Stovall, clerk. Correspondents were received from Liberty and Canaan Associations, and a letter from Big Bear Creek Association. Brothers Gunn and Mays, committee on deceased ministers, made the following report :

“Whereas, the mournful intelligence of the death of two of our beloved brethren in the ministry, has reached this body, viz : John Musgrove and Wm. Irwin ; the former in the sixty-third year of his age, after having devoted a long life in the service of his God, showing by his zeal and piety to all who knew him that he was a man of God ; the latter, in the prime of life, on his way from this State to Texas, was suddenly cut off, but not before, he too had given proof of zeal and piety in the cause of his Master. Therefore, we, the association, feeling the loss we have sustained in this dispensation of Divine Providence, and sympathizing with their bereaved relatives and friends, do take this method of manifesting our love and esteem for our departed brethren, and pray that God may bless and save their families.”

At this meeting, Sabbath Schools, foreign missions and the duty of giving religious instructions to the colored people received considerable attention, and the churches were urged to do their duty in regard to each of these interests.

The following query was presented: "What course should be pursued by a traveling preacher, when individuals demand baptism at his hands, where there is no church convenient, and no members present who are willing to take the responsibility of receiving such an applicant?" The association returned the following answer: "We think it is at all times best to receive and baptize applicants, by and with the consent of the church, or members of the church; where such is not the case, and cannot be conveniently done, we advise that the minister proceed to administer the ordinance, and give a certificate recommending those baptized to the fellowship of the nearest Baptist Church."

Mt. Nebo Church set up the following query: "What shall be done by our churches when members from anti-missionary churches make application for membership with us, who have been denied letters to join us by their respective churches?" The answer given was, "If they are known to be orderly, receive them."

Elder Caigle was appointed missionary for the next year. Elder John W. Miller was appointed to labor two days in each month at Spout Spring, and also at Rock Creek. Elder W. R. Steely was appointed to labor half of the year in the eastern part of the association. The former executive committee was continued. Pledges from the churches for missions were taken, amounting to \$375, cash contributions for missions were \$347.25; for widows and orphans' fund, fifty-two dollars; minutes, \$49.40; total membership, 2993; baptisms, 255.

The committee on education made a very important report, which was unanimously adopted. We give some of the resolutions reported by this committee, which referred to the establishment of a female institute and also to the establishment of a male school of high order—this

was the beginning of the establishment of the Baptist Female Institution at Moulton: "Resolved, that in conformity to a resolution of our General Association, recommending associational schools, we will establish a female institute in the town of Moulton, to be under the charge and direction of this association. Resolved, that Isaac N. Owen, Charles Gibson, James Armstrong, E. D. Townes, Dr. J. W. Micheaux, Thomas Ashford, A. L. Stovall, Gen. T. J. Jones, John H. Edmiston, Amos Jarmon, Jackson Gunn, Thomas M. Peters and Dr. A. A. Burleson be appointed and requested to act as trustees of the institute, and that they be empowered to adopt such measures as they may deem necessary to put the school in immediate and successful operation, and that they report their proceedings and the state of the school at each annual session of the association.

Resolved, that the trustees be requested to organize themselves forthwith as a board, appoint an agent to collect funds, and as soon as may be, elect a suitable number of able and competent teachers, and that they report to the next session of this association a charter for the institute, to be presented to our State legislature, with a view to its passage as an act of incorporation.

Resolved, that they be requested, if they think it expedient, to adopt the school now taught by Elder R. B. Burleson, as an associational school, and as the beginning and ground work of the institute.

Resolved, that we feel and acknowledge the importance of establishing within the bounds of the association, a male academy of high grade, under its charge and direction, and the association shall take measures as soon as practicable to carry this object into effect. The female school was established, but nothing further was done about a male school.

The thirty-second session was held with Cane Creek Church, Franklin county, commencing Friday before the first Sabbath, in October, 1851. Thirty-four churches were represented. The introductory sermon was preached by Elder R. B. Burleson. Two new churches were received, New Prospect, in Winston county, and Cave Spring, in Lawrence county. Elder A. L. Stovall was chosen moderator and Elder Jackson Gunn, clerk. Brothers Wright and Hoke were received as correspondents from Liberty Association, and Brothers W. R. Alexander and Lee, as correspondents from Big Bear Creek Association.

Chancellor E. D. Townes, T. M. Peters, James Armstrong, Dr. J. W. Micheaux and I. N. Owen were appointed a committee to draw up a charter for the associational school, at Moulton, to be presented to the State legislature at its next session.

The following resolutions were adopted: "Resolved, that we deeply deplore the neglect of Christians, generally, in the study of the word of God; and as a means of grace, would most affectionately and respectfully urge upon them, a more diligent and careful, and thorough study of the sacred scriptures. Resolved, that this association request the pastors of churches to preach at least one sermon on the sin of covetousness, to their respective churches."

ELDER SYLVANUS GIBSON.

The death of Elder Sylvanus Gibson, the moderator of the association for many years, was announced at this meeting. A committee was appointed to prepare a suitable memorial of his death. As the report of that committee gives a biographical sketch of his life, we give it in the sketches of ministers, found in another place in this volume.

The memory of Brother Gibson is still fresh in the minds of many of the older members of the association. The writer has heard him spoken of often, and he is convinced, from his acquaintance of more than thirty years with the churches, that his influence was very great, and is still felt for good. He was a good man and did much for the cause of Christ. The contributions for missions at this session were \$453.10; four missionaries were kept in the field a portion of the year, and were paid for their services \$270.25; twenty-seven dollars was distributed to the widows and orphans of deceased ministers; minute fund, \$47.50. The missionary spirit seems to have been gradually increasing, and the churches were more disposed to do something towards giving the gospel to the destitute, than they had previously been. The number of members reported was 2813, of these 1918 were whites and 895 colored, twelve ordained ministers were reported and three licentiates.

The thirty-third session was held at Decatur, Morgan county, commencing on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1852. Elder Wm. Lucas preached the introductory sermon. Thirty-three churches were represented. Four new churches were received, viz: Blountsville, Salem in Morgan, Guntersville and Harmony. Elder A. L. Stovall was moderator and Elder J. Gunn, clerk. The following queries were presented:

First, "Is it good order for a member of a Baptist Church to engage in making or selling ardent spirits?" It was answered unanimously "that such is not good order, because we think it contrary to the spirit of Christianity, and the word of God, and wounds the church, and sets an exceedingly bad example to the world."

Query second, "Is it good order for a member of the Baptist Church to drink intoxicating liquors as beverage?"

Answer, *No*. The following resolutions were adopted and ordered to be spread upon the minutes: "Resolved, first, that we recommend all pastors and preachers in charge to preach at least once a month to the negroes, at their several churches, and explain to them the doctrine of *Justification by Faith*. Second, Resolved, that we see with regret the annual decline of the amount raised for the benefit of the widows and orphans of deceased ministers of our association." The churches were urged to exercise more activity and zeal in making collections for missions. Pastors were requested to preach one sermon annually, upon the subject of temperance and the support of the ministry. Bluff Creek Church in Lauderdale county was granted a letter of dismission, to join Liberty Association. Brother Isaac N. Owen, president of the Board of Trustees of the Baptist Female Institution at Moulton made the report of the Board. We give a summary of that report. Elder A. L. Stovall, the agent of the Board, had succeeded in raising by subscriptions, \$5000, as a building fund. A building committee had been appointed. That committee had agreed upon a plan, and had let out the building for the sum of \$4964.00. The work was commenced. Seven brethren were employed during a portion of the year to do missionary work. The amount paid out for missions was \$556.10. The circular letter was written by Elder R. B. Burleson, on "Ministerial Support." It was an able and well written essay. The number of members reported was 3173; baptisms, 288; contributions for missions, \$267.05; minutes, \$49.10; widows' and orphans' fund, \$11.60.

The thirty-fourth session was held at Salem Church, Morgan county, Friday before first Lord's Day, in October, 1853. Elder R. B. Burleson preached the introductory sermon. Forty churches were represented. Three

new churches were received, viz : Mt. Zion, in Lawrence county ; Mt. Zion, in Morgan county, and Lebanon, in Morgan county. Elder R. B. Burleson was chosen moderator and Elder Enoch Windes, clerk. The president of the board of trustees of the institute at Moulton, Hon. T. M. Peters, made the annual report of that board. He reported that the institute had been incorporated by the legislature during the session of 1851-2; that the building was nearly completed; that the cost of the same would amount to more than \$5000, the amount first proposed; the excess would be \$1000 or \$1500. The school was under the charge of Elder R. B. Burleson. The number of pupils in attendance was about forty.

A question of fellowship came up before the association. A committee was appointed to investigate it. We give the report of the committee, and the action of the association, as it may be useful as a guide to churches in their action in such cases. "The committee, to whom was referred a question of fellowship, beg leave to offer the following report: The case in question is that of Brother Louis Johnson, who was excluded from the church at Shilo, in 1844. That some twelve months afterwards, he applied for recantation, but was refused upon the ground, that he refused to make suitable acknowledgments to its pastor, whom he had personally injured. That some years after this, he applied to Bethel Church, in Marshall county, an anti-missionary church, who assumed the power, and restored him and granted him a letter of dismission, on which he obtained membership in Brown's Valley Church which was afterwards constituted into the church at Guntersville. Your committee are therefore of the opinion that his membership is illegal and out of order, and we would most respectfully advise Brother Johnson to seek his recantation of the church at Shilo,

who, we are advised, are still willing to hear him. All of which is respectfully submitted." The following preamble and resolution was adopted by the association in reference to this case. "Whereas, we deem it highly improper and irregular for one church to receive into her fellowship a member who has been excluded from another church without having been restored; and whereas, it has been made known to this association, by the committee on fellowship that the Guntersville Church has received into her fellowship Brother Louis Johnson, who stands excluded from the fellowship of Shilo Church—therefore, resolved, that the association *advise* the Guntersville Church to require Brother Johnson to go back and make all necessary acknowledgments to the Shilo Church, and become reinstated in the fellowship of that church, and if he refuses to make this acknowledgment to the Shilo Church, for her to exclude him from her membership. The association memorialized the legislature to put a stop to the traffic in ardent spirits. Missionary contributions reported this year were \$323.25; collected by agents and public collection, \$161.15; total, \$484.40; widows' and orphans' fund, \$23.00; minutes, \$54.76; membership reported, 3040; baptisms, 390. The association seemed to be in a prosperous condition. Many of the churches had been greatly revived. Two or three missionaries had been employed during a portion of the year. There were twenty-one ordained ministers. The association was taking a high stand on the subjects of missions and education.

The thirty-fifth session was held at Moulton, commencing on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1854. Elder Wm. H. Barksdale preached the introductory sermon. Forty-three churches were represented. Five new churches were received, viz: New Friendship,

Concord, Frankfort, Duncan's Creek and New Hope. Elder R. B. Burleson was moderator and Elder Enoch Windes, clerk. The following queries were presented and answered: First, "What course should a church pursue with a member who refuses to pay his pastor or his proportional part of the church expenses?" Answer: "It is the duty of the church to discipline such members, that is, to deal with them for the sin of covetousness."

Second query, "What should be done with members who have moved off from their churches without their letters, and live for years in that condition, and do not apply for letters of admission?" Answer, "It would be advisable for the church or churches to address such members by letter, and require them to apply for letters of dismission, and if they refuse, exclude them; and if such members' place of residence or address should not be known by the church, erase their names from the church book."

Third query, "What should be done with a member, who calls for his letter and gets it, and will not join some other church of the same faith and order?" Answer, "If he refuses to comply with the requisition of the church, he should be excluded."

New Prospect Church was granted a letter of dismission, and \$1500 was raised at this meeting by pledges, to pay off the indebtedness of the Female Institute at Moulton. The building was reported by the trustees as being finished, and the school under the charge of Elder R. B. Burleson. Elder E. Y. Vanhoose was employed as a missionary for the next year. Three missionaries had labored six months each, during this year. The committee on fellowship reported on a case of fellowship brought up from Blue Spring Church, as follows: "We inquired into the state of that church, and found that two members

had been received into their fellowship, who had voluntarily withdrawn from Shilo Church to avoid fellowship with a portion of its members. Your committee are of the opinion that this course was out of order, and wrong in practice. We hold the doctrine that there is but one course to pursue, for a member to change his membership from one church to another, and that is by letter, recommending him in full fellowship. We are, therefore, of the opinion that the church erred in this, and in appointing a delegate not in fellowship, by which it violated the rule adopted at the last association, in the case of the Guntersville Church." The Guntersville Church was also declared out of order because it did not heed the advice given by the association at its last session. The total amount of funds collected this year for all purposes was \$854.45; number of communicants reported, 3366; baptisms, 180.

The thirty-sixth session was held with the church at Mt. Pleasant, Lawrence county, commencing on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1855. Elder J. Gunn preached the introductory sermon. Elder R. B. Burleson was moderator and Elder Wm. H. Barksdale, clerk. Thirty-five churches were represented. One new church was received, viz: Cherry Hill, Franklin county; one was excluded, Guntersville. The president of the board of trustees of the Institute at Moulton reported that Elder R. B. Burleson, principal of the school, had resigned, and the board had not secured anyone, as yet, to take his place. He also reported that the indebtedness of the institution amounted to about \$1000. The death of Elder Edmiston was announced at this meeting, and the association adopted resolutions expressive of the feelings of the body concerning his death. Elder Edmiston had been connected with the association for several years.

He had been its missionary, and at one time pastor of the Decatur Church. He was highly esteemed as a man and a minister. We regret that we are not able to give a sketch of his life. He was on his way to Arkansas or Texas when he died.

An effort was made to raise a beneficiary fund of \$900 to support young men preparing for the ministry, at school; \$380.25 was raised by subscription; the amount of cash received for all purposes was \$728.66; amount expended for missions was \$504. The expulsion of the Guntersville Church from the fellowship of the association alluded to above was because she would not rescind her act in receiving an excluded member, Louis Johnson, from another church in the union, Shilo. The facts in the case have already been given. A committee appointed by the association to settle the matter between the two churches, reported that they could accomplish nothing. The association then, on motion, adopted the following: "Inasmuch, as Guntersville Church refused to hear the advice of the association, but continues to retain in her fellowship a brother guilty of charges which caused his expulsion from a sister church, without requiring him first to be reconciled and restored by the former, [latter], as has been from time immemorial the custom of all Baptists churches, therefore, ordered that Guntersville church be excluded from the union of this association."

The number of members reported was 3094; baptisms, 377. Some of the churches were not represented, hence no reports from them. At this meeting, there seemed to be a desire to do more for the education of young ministers than had hitherto been done. One or two young men were at school who were aided by the beneficiary fund. Brother N. A. Bailey, now of Florida, and

Brother W. H. Wallace, now dead, were the young ministers.

The thirty-seventh session was held with Enon Church, Lawrence county, commencing on Friday before the first Sabbath in October, 1856. Elder W. H. Barksdale preached the introductory sermon. Elder Jackson Gunn was chosen moderator and W. H. Barksdale, clerk. Thirty-eight churches were represented. Two new churches were received, viz: Union, in Blount county, and Pleasant Grove, in Lawrence. The following query was presented by Brother Michael W. Mays, of Courtland Church: "What is the duty of a church when two members fall out and the difference becomes irreconcilable?" Brethren Mays, F. C. Owen and L. D. Massengale were appointed a committee to answer it. The committee reported the following answer, which was adopted by the association: "The teachings of the scriptures are, that the church is living under the *new commandment* of our Savior, which is, '*that ye love one another.*' This new commandment is binding and final, and when a church knows that any of its members are at variance, it is her duty to strive with them in the spirit of the gospel, and if they refuse to be reconciled, and will not hear the church, the church should exclude them. This we believe to be the teaching of Jesus Christ, as recorded in the 18th of Matthew, and likewise Paul, in the 6th chapter and 17th verse of his epistle to the Romans. We recommend the adoption of the following resolution: Resolved, that we recommend every church to cut off all the members who will not be at peace, one with another."

Elder M. A. Verser, a missionary of the association reported that he had labored ten months, had preached one hundred and seven sermons, and had raised by subscription for missions, \$202.45. The board of trustees of the

Institute at Moulton, reported that they had secured the services of Rev. Josephus Shackelford, as principal of the school, and that the institution was now in successful operation. The board had secured the services of Elder J. Gunn, as agent, who had succeeded in raising by subscription \$2195, out of which his salary as agent was to be taken; \$435 had also been raised in addition; and the board had expended for a piano, desks, etc., the amount of \$551.72. An effort was made at this meeting to raise a new beneficiary fund to sustain young ministers at school—\$130.50 was subscribed. A report on foreign missions was made, which recommended the foreign mission board at Richmond, Virginia. No missionaries were appointed by the association, but the matter was left to the executive committee. The number of members reported was 3494; baptisms, 191. The churches had fallen off in their missionary contributions, and it was necessary to raise funds from the delegates to pay balances due the missionaries. The brethren came up nobly and made up the deficiency.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM 1857 TO 1860. THE ASSOCIATION PROSPEROUS.

THE thirty-eighth session was held at Hopewell Church, Morgan county, commencing Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1857. Elder Josephus Shackelford preached the introductory sermon. Elder J. Gunn was moderator and W. H. Barksdale, clerk. Forty churches were represented and two new churches were received, viz: Rock Spring and Warrior River, Dr. Joseph H. Eaton, president of the Union University Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and Elder E. Strode were received as messengers from the General Association of Middle Tennessee and North Alabama. Brother A. B. Smith was received from the Cherokee Association. The Institute at Moulton was reported as being in a flourishing condition. It had been furnished with philosophical apparatus and a library. There was still a debt against it of five or six hundred dollars.

The following letter was presented from the Primitive Baptists:

Brethren of the missionary order:

Seeing that the question of reunion is agitated among the great Baptist family, we the Muscle Shoals Association, of the primitive order, being desirous of union among the great family of Baptists, do propose to meet the missionary part of the Muscle Shoals Association in convention at any suitable point in the bounds of the association by a committee of two members from each

church in the association for the purpose of devising some proper plan of union. You will designate the time and place to A. Simpson and E. Dutton, who are authorized to bear this to you.

Signed by order of the association.

JEREMIAH DAILY, *Moderator*.

R. B. ALLISON, *Clerk*.

There was considerable discussion upon the matter. The association thought that it was impracticable to hold so large a meeting, or to arrive at any satisfactory arrangement if such a meeting should be held. The following resolution was adopted by the association as an answer to the request of the primitive brethren:

“Resolved, that our clerk be authorized to inform the churches of our anti-missionary brethren, that this association would advise them, if they wish membership with this body, to present themselves as churches at our next association with petitionary letters, setting forth their articles of faith, etc.” We were present at this meeting, but as we had been a member of the body, but for a short time, we did not know all the circumstances of the split, which had occurred. Knowing them as we now do, we are inclined to believe that the wiser course would have been to have modified the suggestion of our anti-missionary brethren somewhat—say, have a committee of five or ten representative brethren from each association who should meet and try to make a basis of union, and report the same to their respective associations for adoption or rejection. Some of these brethren had seen their error in withdrawing from the association, but it was natural for them to have some pride in the matter, and be unwilling to come back church by church, after having formed another association. It would have gratified their pride if a reconciliation could have been accomplished in

another way. They very well knew that our association had no concessions to make, as regarded missions. It had taken its position, and was not to be driven from it. The resolution passed accomplished nothing, except to drive the anti-missionary churches further from us. The executive committee reported that they had not employed a missionary during the year, because the churches had not pledged anything to support a missionary. Brother A. Houk, treasurer of the beneficiary fund, reported, that the whole amount collected was \$307.50; amount paid out, \$292.50; amount yet due on subscriptions, \$521.75. The committee was authorized to procure at least one young man who is desirous to obtain an education for the ministry, and place him at Union University as soon as practicable. One hundred and forty-five dollars was subscribed towards building the Baptist Church house at Huntsville, Ala.; \$40 dollars was raised to buy books for circulations by our missionaries; \$202 was raised for missionary fund. The number of members reported was 3346; baptisms, 167.

The thirty-ninth session was held at Town Creek Church, Lawrence county, commencing Friday before first Lord's Day, in October, 1858. The introductory sermon was preached by Elder J. Gunn. Forty churches were represented. Six new churches were received, viz: New Prospect, Burleson, Union, Macedonia, in Winston county, Mt. Gilead and Friendship, in Morgan. Elder J. Gunn was the moderator and Elder Wiley W. Wilhite, clerk. Elder W. R. Alexander was received as a messenger from Big Bear Creek Association. The board of trustees of the Institute at Moulton reported a larger number of pupils in attendance upon that institution than had ever been before, and that the school was flourishing. It had a library of over 500 volumes. The

death of Deacon F. C. Owen was announced. The following was adopted by the association in memory of the deceased:

“Whereas, God has seen fit to remove our beloved brother, F. C. Owen, in the prime of life, and in the midst of a career as remarkable for usefulness as it was conspicuous and lovely for its piety. Therefore, resolved, first, that in the death of Brother Owen, this association has suffered a sad and irreparable loss.

“Resolved, second, that this association hereby express her lively remembrance of his pious example, his untiring zeal and self-sacrificing liberality in prosecuting every plan that proposed the advancement of the Baptist cause within her bounds.

“Resolved, third, that while we would endeavor to exercise a submissive spirit under the heavy bereavement, we would tender to his afflicted family and church our deep sympathy in their affliction, with expression of our full assurance, “that our loss is his eternal gain.”

“Resolved, fourth, that this preamble and resolutions be printed in our minutes.”

Brother Owen was a good man, and an efficient worker, and it was fitting that the association should put upon record some expression of their regard for his memory. Brother Owen left in his will, \$250 to the association, the interest of which was to be used for missionary purposes. Since that time, up to the present year, 1890, that fund has paid to the association \$640 for missions. Though dead he yet speaketh. His works follow him. How much good this legacy has done, eternity alone will reveal. May not other brethren follow his example? Brother Owen was not a rich man. He had a wife and one child to provide for, yet he was willing to leave a portion of his small estate to the cause

which he dearly loved. There are many Baptists in this association who are able to do the same. May the Lord induce them to do so.

Elder E. Strode was received as a messenger from the Liberty Association. A report on Indian missions urged a more hearty support of that work, and co-operation with the Domestic Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, then located at Marion, Alabama. A resolution was also adopted recommending pastors to deliver a discourse upon Indian missions, and take up a collection for the same, and forward the money to the board at Marion. The executive committee reported that it had not been able to employ a missionary for the past year.

The following query was presented: "What shall be done with a brother, who wishes to preach, but his church, not thinking him qualified, refuses to grant him license, should he continue to preach?" It was referred to a committee of the following brethren to answer: Elders R. J. Jennings and Craig, and Brother A. Houk, who reported as follows: "Your committee to whom was referred the query on ministerial liberty, beg leave to report. The church of which he is a member should examine him touching his qualifications as set forth in Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus, and if he should fail to meet the qualifications there set forth, and will not abide the decision of the church, he should be dealt with as an unruly member."

The report of the treasurer of the beneficiary fund showed \$45 on hand. Four churches were granted letters of dismission, viz: New Friendship, Frankfort, Cane Creek, Burleson, Franklin county. These churches united with the Big Bear Creek Association. Pledges were called for from the churches for missions; \$241 was pledged; four missionaries were appointed, one for each

district. The total number of members reported was 3306; 753 of these were colored; baptisms, 292.

A short time previous to this meeting, a serious difficulty had arisen in the first church at Nashville, Tennessee, between its pastor, Dr. R. B. C. Howell and Dr. J. R. Graves, editor of the *Tennessee Baptist*, who was a member of the first church. Charges had been preferred against Dr. Graves and were then pending in the first church. A series of resolutions were offered by some brother in the association, which condemned the action of the first church, and approved of the course of Dr. Graves. A considerable discussion arose on these resolutions, which were finally laid on the table. The association held that it had no business to interfere with the matter; that to pass such resolutions would be to dictate to an independent church that had a right to control its own affairs. A righteous and wise decision we think.

The fortieth session was held with Mt. Pisgah Church, Morgan county, commencing on Friday before the first Sabbath, in October, 1859. Elder W. W. Wilhite preached the introductory sermon. Elder J. Gunn was moderator and W. W. Wilhite, clerk. Forty churches were represented by delegates and seven by letter. Six new churches were received, viz: New Prospect, Rock Creek, Bluff Spring, Arkadelphia, Bethlehem and Bear Creek. Elder Mathews and Brother Armstead Payne were received as messengers from Big Bear Creek Association. Elder Martin Ball, an agent for the Domestic Mission Board at Marion, Alabama, and Elder Booth, agent for the Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Virginia, were in attendance and invited to seats. Both of these brethren were from Mississippi. A book fund was raised, amounting to \$104; books were to be purchased and given to the missionaries to sell; \$20 was raised for foreign missions; \$35 for

the Marion board and \$350.51 for associational missions. Elder J. Shackelford was appointed a correspondent to the Alabama Baptist State convention. The number of communicants reported was 3261; baptisms, 293. The following churches called for letters of dismission for the purpose of forming a new association, Rock Spring, Friendship, Harmony, Brown's Valley, Warrior Creek, Blountsville, Mt. Tabor, Hopewell, Good Hope, Union, Arkadelphia, Blue Spring, Antioch, Flint Creek—eleven in all. Nearly all of these churches were in Blount county, some in Walker and perhaps Winston. Subsequently they formed a new association which was called "Warrior River," with which we now correspond. The meeting at Mt. Pisgah was a very pleasant one and was made more so by the presence of several visiting brethren.

The forty-first session was held at Moulton, commencing on Friday before the first Sabbath, in October, 1860. The introductory sermon was preached by Elder J. Gunn. Thirty-five churches were represented. Three new churches were received, viz: Mt. Tabor, in Marshall county; Sand Lick, in Franklin county; and Bethlehem, in Winston county. Elder J. Gunn was moderator and Elder Jos. Shackelford was clerk. Elder J. K. Lynn was received as a messenger from Warrior River Association. Elders W. R. Alexander and Mathews and Brother C. A. Womble were received as messengers from Big Bear Creek Association, and Elder E. Ströde, from Liberty Association. Dr. Basil Manly, Sr., of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, was present as an evangelist, visiting the churches and preaching to them. This venerable brother was most cordially received by the association, and preached on the Sabbath, to the great delight and edification of a large congregation.

The association appointed Friday before the first Lord's

Day, in November, as a day of fasting and prayer in behalf of the country which was now in the midst of an exciting presidential election, and requested the churches to observe it. The country was then upon the verge of a great civil war. The question of slavery which had so long disturbed the peace of the country was the exciting cause. The Democratic party, which was now in power, had been rent in twain, on the doctrine of squatter sovereignty, as it was termed. Stephen A. Douglass was the candidate for president of one wing of the party, and Herschel V. Johnson for vice president, John C. Breckenridge and Joseph Lane were the candidates of the other wing. The Republican party, which had declared against slavery in the territories, and whose desire was to abolish it altogether, was headed by Abraham Lincoln and Hannibal Hamlin. Another party, or fragments from all the parties, whose desire was to bring about some kind of compromise, was headed by John Bell and Edward Everett. The election was to come off in November. The canvass was very exciting. Some of the leading men of the southern States asserted that the election of Abraham Lincoln would be a just cause for the secession of the slave States from the Union. The legislatures of some of the southern States had provided for the calling of conventions in their respective States, in case of his election. Great excitement prevailed all over the country. It was thought by Christians that some effort should be made to avert the impending evil and quiet the excitement. In God was their trust, hence they appealed to Him, but all in vain. The minds of the people were so excited that they did not take time to consider the consequences. God seemed not to hear us. The crash came. Like a mighty whirlwind, it brought destruction and ruin in its train. The mad passions of men were

aroused, and they were left to themselves to work out their own destruction. God, in His own good time, calmed the troubled waters and brought peace and order out of strife and confusion. Looking back now, after a quarter of a century or more has passed away, to all the circumstances that brought on the mighty contest of four years, which ended in the destruction of slavery, a contest unparalleled in the history of the world, in which the southern confederacy sustained herself most nobly against the greatest odds, and yielded only when completely exhausted and overpowered by numbers, we see the hand of Divine Providence directing and controlling human events. The negro was brought to this country a heathen and was made a slave. Here he was taught Christianity, and now he is a fitting instrument to carry the gospel to his race in Africa. To do this, he must be a free man, and God has made him so. The northern and southern people were the instruments in bringing this about. We cannot understand the workings of Providence, these are beyond our ken, but nevertheless, we know that God rules this world, and all things will work out according to His will. Man proposes, but God disposes, and we have the comforting assurance, "that all things work together for *good* to them that love God."

We, of the South, now know that we have been benefited by the abolition of slavery. We did not think so then. We lost the negroes as property, but it was property that carried with it much evil. It was proving a curse to our children. It placed upon us many grave responsibilities. We suppose, now, that if the South could secure the institution of slavery again by merely voting for it, it would not have it.

Two queries were presented, one from Pleasant Grove Church, as follows: "What ought to be done with a

brother who has a joint letter with his wife, after the granting of which, he is excluded, and he refuses to give up his letter?" It was answered thus: "Nothing more can be done by the church." The second query was from Bear Creek Church: "In receiving members into the church, when is the proper time to extend the hand of fellowship, on the relation of their experience, or when they receive the ordinance of baptism?" Answer: "The hand of fellowship should be given after baptism."

The report of the board of trustees of the Female Institute at Moulton showed that the indebtedness of the institution up to the 8th of October, 1860, was \$2,199.19.

The board urged the payment of this debt. The subject was discussed at some length, and finally a subscription was raised, amounting to \$1,874.22. The balance was assumed by Brothers I. N. Owen and Maclin Sledge. The indebtedness of the institution was considered settled, as the creditors expressed themselves as being willing to take the subscriptions for their debts.

It may seem a little strange perhaps to the reader, that this debt should continue to grow, when, at one time it was reported as low as \$1000 or less, and when subscriptions had been taken up several times, to pay it off—the facts are these: at the beginning, the estimate of the cost of the building, \$5000 was too small. It cost more than was expected. Brother Stovall, the first agent, raised \$5000. It cost from \$1000 to \$1500 more than that, besides it had to be furnished with desks, piano and apparatus. In 1854, \$1500 was raised by subscription to pay off this indebtedness. Subscriptions are easy to obtain, but it is not so easy to obtain the money after it is subscribed. Like many subscriptions raised at our general meetings we suppose much of this \$1500 was never collected, as the board, in 1855, reported \$1000 still due. In 1857, Elder J. Gunn

was appointed agent to raise funds. The board reported that he had raised by subscriptions \$2175, out of which his salary was to come. It would seem that this ought to have paid the debt, but it did not, for in 1858, the board reported a debt still existing, amounting to five or six hundred dollars. In 1860, the debt had increased to \$2199.19—how we are not informed: At this meeting it was finally disposed of. If all the money subscribed to this institution had been paid, it cost about eleven thousand dollars. We can learn a very instructive lesson from this little experience, in building educational institutions or any other public building where the money has to come from the liberality of the people :

First, know what you want before you commence to build.

Second, know what it will cost.

Third, get up the money before you commence to build.

Fourth, If you take subscriptions, secure them by a note that you can use as money.

Fifth, If there should be an indebtedness incurred that was unexpected, let the denomination know just exactly what it is and all the facts about it.

The ministers of the association were requested to hold missionary mass meetings in the month of July, and to present the subject of missions, both home and foreign to the churches, and thus endeavor to increase the missionary spirit among the churches. The missionary fund reported on hand was \$502, of which \$450 dollars was paid to the missionaries. The number of members reported was 3300, of these 1046 were blacks; baptisms, 341. During the year \$1147.80 was contributed by the churches for missionary purposes. Sum total for all purposes paid and subscribed, \$3080.

CHAPTER VII.

FROM 1861 TO 1867. TROUBLOUS TIMES—WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION.

THE forty-second session was held at Russell Valley Church, commencing on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1861. Elder Mike Finney preached the introductory sermon. Elder J. Gunn was moderator and Jos. Shackelford, clerk. Twenty-five churches were represented by delegates and five by letter. One new church was received, viz: Cedar Creek. The association suspended its regular order of business each day at eleven A. M., and spent one half hour in prayer in behalf of the country, which was now in the midst of a cruel war. The committee on associational missions reported, "that owing to the disturbed condition of our country, we are at a loss to devise any plan that can be successfully carried on." They recommended "that an executive board be appointed as usual who should make such arrangements to carry on the missionary work as they in their wisdom might think proper."

The following resolution was adopted, viz: "Resolved, that it is the opinion of this association, that the cause of our Savior demands at this particular time, our earnest efforts and prayers, and that instead of giving up our missionary enterprises, we should make more exertion and greater sacrifices to sustain them, and trust to the promise of our Heavenly Father, "that we shall reap if we faint not." The usual reports on education, state of

religion, etc., were adopted. Nothing of very great importance was done. "The war between the States" was going on vigorously, and the minds of the people were absorbed by the exciting scenes that were constantly transpiring. Soldiers were marching through the country to the front. Most of the young men were in the army and many middle aged ones. The minds and hearts of the people were concerned about the war, and little attention was given to religion.

A resolution of sympathy for the Confederate States was passed. The amount sent up for missions was \$345.05. The number of members reported was 3454.

The forty-third session was held at Hopewell Church, Morgan county, commencing on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1862. Elder Thomas Nicholson preached the introductory sermon. Elder J. Gunn was moderator and Brother Z. F. Freeman was clerk. Thirteen churches were represented. This was owing to the condition of the country. The federal troops had occupied Decatur and the Tennessee Valley since April, and it was thought there would be no meeting on that account, as there was continual raiding by the federals, and citizens feared to be away from home. A few weeks before the time of meeting the federals evacuated north Alabama.

There was but little done. Over \$300 was raised for missions, and a number of ministers promised missionary labor.

The forty-fourth session was held at Town Creek Church, commencing Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1863. Elder J. Gunn preached the introductory sermon. Sixteen churches were represented. Elder J. Gunn was moderator and Elder J. C. Roberts, clerk. The war was still going on, and the Tennessee Valley

had become a battle ground between the two contending forces. The enemy was making frequent raids through the country, consequently those not belonging to the army kept themselves at home. But little business was done. There was a good missionary spirit manifested, and several ministers pledged gratuitous service. Elder Wm. Spain was elected missionary by the association and did some good work.

The forty-fifth session was held at Enon Church, Lawrence county, commencing on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1864. Elder Jos. Shackelford was moderator and Elder J. C. Roberts, clerk. There were but few churches represented. The unsettled condition of the country was the cause. Decatur was in the hands of the federal troops, and frequently raiding the country, and worse than this, marauding parties were pillaging everywhere. No house was safe unless under the protection of confederate or federal troops. Murders and burnings were common occurrences. As a matter of course, we could not expect many to meet together in the association. Scarcely any business was done. The organization was kept up, and what few brethren were present manifested a disposition to do what they could to have the gospel preached.

The forty-sixth session was held with Hopewell Church, commencing on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1865. Elder Jos. Shackelford preached the introductory sermon. The attendance was moderately good. Elder Shackelford was moderator and J. C. Roberts, clerk. The war had closed in the spring of this year, but everything was in a very unsettled condition. The people were greatly relieved, but they were still fearful that their troubles were not over. The confederacy had fallen, and now the question was, what will be the fate of

the Southern States? Will they be restored to the union as sovereign States or as subjected provinces? The future was dark. No one could tell what would be the result. The assassination of Lincoln made matters worse for the South, as we all thought. We were looking for the general confiscation of property and the imprisonment of many of our leaders. Under these circumstances, as a matter of course, our churches were not doing much. Gloom and despondency for a while, as a dark cloud settled upon our people. Nevertheless, they did not give themselves up to despair. They prepared to meet the disaster of defeat and its consequences, as they had met danger during the war, bravely and as men. The Baptists as a people did their duty to their country during the war, and now it was ended, they bore their misfortune as brave Christian men and women. When peace came, it found them along with the great majority of the Southern people, ruined financially, yet they went to work to rebuild and improve their ruined fortunes, and in doing this, they did not forget to discharge their duties as Christians. Their churches were supplied with the preached gospel and they contributed of their means, small as it was, to give the gospel to those who had it not. Many of the ministers of this association served churches, some for nothing, and some for a mere pittance. They were determined that the gospel should be preached.

At this meeting an executive board was appointed and located at Moulton. It was made the duty of that board to employ a missionary who should also be an agent to collect funds for missions. The control of the missionary work was put into the hands of this board. Eighty-five dollars and thirty-five cents was collected for missions, and \$73.60 for minutes; \$291 was pledged for missions.

A petitionary letter was received from the Mt. Pleasant Colored Baptist Church for membership. This elicited some discussion. The church had been organized out of the colored members of the Mt. Pleasant Church, Lawrence county. The presbytery consisted of brethren who were ministers of the association, one, the pastor of Mt. Pleasant Church. The colored people were organized into a church at his suggestion. This was done because, under the new order of things, the negroes being free, it was thought best that the colored people should be by themselves. This would suit both them and the whites. In most of the churches of the Tennessee Valley, they were largely in the majority. And if they saw proper to exercise their rights as members, now being free, they could control those churches and call whom they pleased as pastor. Surrounded as they were, by men who did not scruple at anything to harass and insult southern people, they might be induced to exercise their power in the churches, as they were disposed to do in the State. To avoid any trouble, the suggestion was made to the colored members of the Mt. Pleasant Church by the writer, who was the pastor of the church, to organize themselves into a separate church. They accepted the suggestion, believing that it was best for them and for the whites also. Mt. Pleasant Church gave letters to all who wished to go into the new organization, and the church was organized, as stated above. These were the circumstances under which the first colored Baptist church in the Tennessee Valley was organized. Upon the suggestion of the writer, this church applied for membership in the association. This was done in order that the subject might be brought up before the association, and that it might suggest a plan to the colored people, and also to the churches composing the association, by which all

difficulties might be avoided. The author of this suggestion was confident that the church would not be received, but he expected that a plan would be suggested by the association that would meet the requirements of the case. The association did decline to receive the church, and recommended that it wait until it could ascertain whether it could organize churches of their color sufficient to organize an association. It did so. Very soon there were colored Baptist churches enough to organize an association, and the writer assisted a few years after this, in organizing the Muscle Shoals Colored Baptist Association, at Tuscumbia, Alabama, which is now a large and flourishing body.

The *Christian Herald*, a Baptist weekly newspaper published at Moulton, Alabama, by Shackelford and White, of which Rev. Josephus Shackelford was editor, was recommended to the patronage of the brethren. This was the first Baptist paper published in the South, after the "surrender." Its first number was issued July 21, 1865, when there were no mails and no means of circulating it, except by hand. A permit had to be secured from the federal commander at Decatur, before it could be published. Its publication was continued until 1875, when it was sold to J. J. Toon, of the *Christian Index*, of Georgia. It was removed to Tuscumbia in 1867, and a few years after to Nashville, Tennessee.

The forty-seventh session was held with Mt. Pleasant Church, Lawrence county, commencing on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1866. Elder J. Gunn preached the introductory sermon. Twenty churches were represented. J. Gunn was moderator and Elder G. A. Coulson was clerk. Elder Enoch E. Windes was the missionary and agent, appointed by the executive board. He received over \$500 in cash and subscriptions. Elders

M. A. Verser and W. W. Wilhite were missionaries and did good work during the year. The business at this meeting was conducted harmoniously and the mission work continued. The board was instructed to procure a missionary for the colored people. Delegates were appointed to the General Association of North Alabama, which had been recently organized.

The forty-eighth session convened with the Moulton Baptist Church on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1867. Elder J. Gunn was moderator and J. C. Roberts, clerk. There was nothing of very great interest done at this meeting. Elder T. W. Tobey had been in charge of the Female Institute at Moulton, but only retained it for a short time, during the spring of 1867. Elder John L. Lattimore succeeded him as principal.

Elders M. A. Verser and R. J. Jennings were appointed missionaries by the executive board. Elder Jennings continued in the field three months, and then resigned, because there were no funds in the treasury to pay him, and he could not collect enough on the field to sustain him. The year 1867 was a hard year, and the churches were slow to raise money for missions. The General Association of North Alabama was at work making an effort to supply the destitution in the towns, but it made but little progress. The churches were in a languid condition.

The representation at this meeting was much better than at any session since the war. We have not been able to find a minute of this meeting, hence can give no information of the number baptized and the number of members. The churches had not recovered from the war, and their rolls had not been revised. Dr. Tobey, alluded to above, as principal of the Female Institute for a short time, was formerly a missionary of the Southern Baptist

Convention to China. He was a man of good abilities, and well read in the scriptures. He died a few years ago in Florida, we believe.

These were the days of reconstruction, and the churches felt the evils as well as the State.

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM 1868 TO 1875. RECOVERING FROM THE WAR.

THE forty-ninth session was held at Hopewell Church, commencing Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1868. Elder J. Gunn was moderator and Jos. Shackelford, clerk. The introductory sermon was preached by Elder Jos. Shackelford. Three new churches were received, viz: Cedar Creek, Hopewell in Winston county, and Ebenezer. Twenty-seven churches were represented. Elder T. B. Espy was received as a correspondent from Liberty Association; and Elder F. L. Seward, from Big Bear Creek Association; and Elder John G. Gibson, grandson of Elder Sylvanus Gibson, deceased, of Georgia, was present.

The report of the board of trustees of the Female Institute at Moulton, stated that Elder John L. Lattimore, of Mississippi, had been elected principal of the school, in place of T. W. Tobey, resigned, and that the prospects of the school were brightening.

The *Kind Words* Sunday School paper, published by the Sunday School board of the Southern Baptist convention, was recommended to the churches and Sunday Schools. Pledges and collections for missions were taken up amounting to \$239. Elder M. A. Verser had been employed as missionary in the third district for the year. He reported 132 sermons preached, fifty-two baptized, three churches constituted, and \$168.50 collected. Elder R. J. Jennings had traveled three months, and for want of funds, resigned.

A beneficiary committee was appointed, whose duty it was to receive funds for the education of young men preparing for the ministry, and to hunt out such men.

The committee consisted of Brothers John L. Lattimore, W. A. Gilbert and J. Y. Shoemaker. The committee, on state of religion, reported a luke warm spiritual condition in the churches. The following query was presented by Elder W. W. Wilhite, and the moderator requested to answer it at the next session: "Is there precept or example in the Word of God for funeral preaching?"

The association passed a resolution opposing a union of the General Association of North Alabama with that of middle Tennessee, which was proposed. This was done, because, at that time, it was thought that we could cultivate our immediate field better by ourselves.

Brother W. W. Orr, of Morgan county, presented the association with \$25, which was appropriated as follows: \$20 to associational missions, and \$5 for *Kind Words* Sunday School paper. The total number of members reported was 2470; baptisms, 252.

The fiftieth session was held with the Enon Church, Lawrence county, commencing the Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1869. Elder J. Gunn preached the introductory sermon. Elder Gunn was moderator and Jos. Shackelford, clerk. Thirty-three churches were represented. Three new churches were received, viz: Shilo, in Winston; Duncan's Creek, in Franklin, and Freeman's Chapel. Elder F. L. Seward was received as agent of the Domestic Mission Board, at Marion. E. Gordon Musgrove was received as a messenger from Warrior River Association. Elder D. H. Selph, president of Union University was present as a visiting brother, and in the interest of that institution. The sum of \$530 was

raised in cash and pledges for missions. Only one missionary, Elder M. A. Verser had been in the field during the year. Forty dollars was raised for the education of young ministers. Elder Selph preached on Sunday to a large congregation. Pastors were requested to preach to their churches on the subject of temperance. Brother Verser reported ninety-five sermons preached, ten baptisms. The number of baptisms reported this year was 341, a considerable increase over last year; the churches seemed to be in a more prosperous condition.

The fifty-first session was held at Town Creek Church, commencing on Tuesday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1870. The time of meeting had been changed, so that a Sabbath would not be included in the meeting. It was thought by some that this arrangement would be better, as the churches would not be deprived of preaching on the first Sabbath, and brethren would not be so apt to break away from the association before its adjournment. The change was not satisfactory, however, and at this meeting it was put back to the old time. The introductory sermon was preached by Elder J. L. Lattimore. Elder Gunn was moderator and Elder J. C. Roberts, clerk. Thirty-two churches were represented. Two new churches were received, viz: Mt. Zion, in Lawrence, and Beech Spring, in Marshall county. Elder Robert Kimbrough, of Tennessee, was received as an agent for the fund to sustain theological students at Union University, and Elder F. M. Hagood, of Georgia, agent of Sunday School board of southern Baptist convention. Elder George D. Russell, of Mississippi, formerly a member of the association was present as a visiting brother, also Elder Rey from Big Bear Creek Association, as a messenger. The report of the committee on home missions stated that there was a great lack of interest in the

churches on the subject of missions. It recommended the appointment of an executive committee to consist of three from each district, whose duty it should be to take the oversight of the missionary work in the association. The report was adopted and a committee of nine appointed, as follows: Charles Gibson, J. B. Speake, W. D. McDaniel, W. A. Gilbert, J. D. Inman, W. W. Pearson, D. J. Orr, Z. F. Freeman, S. Simpson.

Elders M. A. Verser and W. W. Wilhite had been the missionaries during the year. Brother Verser reported five months engaged, seventy-two sermons preached, forty-five baptized, one church constituted and three sabbath schools organized. Brother Wilhite reported eight months engaged, ninety sermons preached, fourteen baptized, two churches constituted.

BAPTISMS OF PEDO-BAPTISTS AND CAMPBELLITES.

Elder J. C. Roberts offered the following preamble and resolution, which was adopted:

“Whereas, there seems to be among Baptists in some sections of our country, in this age of rapid progress, as well in religious as in national, civil and political enterprise, a disposition to surrender our peculiar and distinctive principles as a denomination, by recognizing as valid baptism, the immersion of Pedo-Baptists and Campbellite societies, and whereas, we regard such surrender, as being subversive of our distinctive principles as Baptists, and as having a direct tendency to destroy that unity of faith and practice, which has ever marked the Baptists in every age of the Christian dispensation, ‘as a peculiar sect every where spoken against.’ And, whereas, in the discussion of this question, which must inevitably tell upon our future destiny for weal or woe, it becomes us as an association of Baptists to speak out.”

“Resolved, therefore, that we the Muscle Shoals Association of North Alabama disapprove of the validity of all such immersions as set forth in the above preamble, and as an advisory council, advise our churches carefully to guard against all such intrusions, as emanating not from the word of God, but from a show of false charity so rife in the world, whose tendency is only evil and that continually.”

Thus the association again proclaimed itself as standing upon the foundation of the fathers, no recognition of any unscriptural act. Ministers were requested to preach to their churches in the month of May, on the subject of missions, with direct reference to the work within the bounds of the association; \$505 was reported by the finance committee as received for missions. Glorious revivals were reported from some of the churches; 332 baptisms; total membership, 2706; \$52 was collected by Elder Kimbrough for theological students at Union University. Elder John L. Lattimore had been continued as principal of the Female Institute at Moulton.

The fifty-second session was held with the Russellville Church, commencing on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1871. Elder J. Gunn preached the introductory sermon. Elder Gunn was moderator and J. C. Roberts, clerk. Thirty-six churches were represented. One new church was received, viz: Pilgrim's Rest. Messengers were present from Big Bear Creek, Colbert Shoals, Liberty and North River Associations. At this meeting the association appointed delegates to the General Association of Middle Tennessee and North Alabama, these bodies having united. The board of trustees of the Female Institute at Moulton reported that Elder J. L. Lattimore, owing to ill health, had resigned as principal of that institution, and that Brother O. D. Gibson had

been elected to succeed him, who had taught the school until June, 1871, at which time Elder Lattimore took charge of the school again and had taught it up to October, assisted by Prof. C. G. Lynch. The number of pupils was sixty. Elders M. A. Verser and J. C. Roberts were missionaries for this year, but labored only for a few months each.

Elder Wm. Leigh, one of the oldest ministers in the association, perhaps the oldest, was present at this meeting, and recognized as a delegate from Mt. Pleasant Church. Brother Leigh was a member of the association very soon after its constitution, and a member of Carmel Church, one of the constituent members of the association. He was greatly instrumental in getting the association to take a stand for missions. He originated the plan for having a missionary society to meet at the same time and place of the associations when that body declined to make an active effort towards missionary work. Fifty-five dollars was raised for ministerial education. The churches were reported to be in a prosperous condition. The following resolutions on temperance were adopted:

“Resolved, that we as an association of Baptists discountenance the use of ardent spirits as a beverage by the members of our churches.”

“Resolved, that we will withdraw fellowship from any church in our union, that countenances drunkenness in its members.”

Elder Wm. Mathews from Big Bear Creek Association was present and preached on Sunday night. Elder C. Smith, of Florida, preached at eleven a. m. Sunday. There was raised in cash and pledges for missions \$592.70. An executive board of five members, located at Moulton, was appointed. The death of Elder A. W. Nunn was

reported. This brother lived in Morgan county, and was a member of Hopewell Church; he was an ordained minister, but did not have charge of any churches—he was a good man. A query concerning the dancing of church members, was answered as follows: “This body regards dancing as usually practiced, unscriptural, and is therefore discountenanced by us.” Total number of members reported, 2944; baptisms, 286.

The fifty-third session was held with the Pleasant Hill Church, Morgan county, commencing on Friday before the first Lord’s Day, in October, 1872. Elder J. C. Vincent preached the introductory sermon. Elder J. Gunn was moderator and J. C. Roberts, clerk. Twenty-nine churches were represented. Three new churches were received, viz: Friendship, in Morgan; Liberty and Union Hill, in Lawrence county.

Correspondence was opened with the Alabama Baptist State convention, and Jos. Shackelford and D. J. Orr were appointed messengers. Elder W. W. Wilhite, missionary for the year, reported, engaged eleven weeks, twenty-eight sermons preached, forty-eight baptized and two ministers ordained. Elder J. C. Vincent, missionary, reported, engaged eleven weeks, fifty-five sermons preached, fourteen baptized. Elder J. C. Roberts, missionary, reported, engaged nine months, 105 sermons preached, thirteen baptized, one minister ordained.

Prof. George W. Jarmon, of Union University was present and addressed the association in behalf of the University and ministerial education. There was raised for ministerial education \$108. Duncan’s Creek and Cedar Creek Churches were granted letters of dismissal. By resolution the association expressed itself in full sympathy with the Sunday School board of the southern Baptist convention, and its paper *Kind Words*. The churches

generally were reported in a prosperous condition. Prayer meetings were recommended to be held by each church, on the Sabbath at ten a. m. Two deacons were ordained by a presbytery consisting of Elder J. L. Lattimore, J. C. Vincent and W. W. Wilhite. This was done at the request of Pleasant Hill Church. At eleven a. m. Elder Jos. Shackelford preached, by request, on the subject of communion. By pledges and cash, \$460.25 was raised for missions.

The death of Elder Enoch Windes was announced. He was long connected with the association, and was at one time its clerk. He had not attended its meetings for a number of years. Suitable mention was made of his death in the minutes. The total number of members reported at this meeting was 2555; baptisms, 305. Two churches had withdrawn—which decreased the membership. \$392.33 cash received for missions by finance committee.

The fifty-fourth session was held with Bethel Church Lawrence county, commencing on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1873. Elder James S. Gibson preached the introductory sermon. Elder J. Gunn was moderator and Elder R. A. Windes was clerk. Thirty-six churches were represented. Eight new churches were received, viz: Valley Grove, Colbert county; Beech Spring, Marshall county; Blue Spring, Bethel and Bethlehem, Morgan county; Providence, Franklin county; Wolf Spring and Gilmerville, now Hillsboro, Lawrence county. Elders W. H. Bryan and J. O. A. Pace were present as messengers from Big Bear Creek Association. Elder Norwood was recognized as a messenger from Colbert Shoals Association.

Elder A. D. Trimble was received as superintendent and agent of the Orphan's Home, in Mississippi. Dele-

gates were appointed to the Alabama Baptist State Convention to meet at Tuscaloosa. A Sabbath School board was appointed which was to manage the Sabbath School interests in the association. The following brethren constituted the board: M. A. Verser, Jos. Shackelford, J. L. Lattimore, D. A. Burleson and Jas. S. Gibson. Four hundred and thirty-seven dollars was pledged for missions by the churches. Many churches had, during this year, been blessed with revivals, and the spiritual condition of the churches was good.

The death of Elder Wm. Leigh was announced. We have already made mention of Brother Leigh as being one of the oldest ministers in our association. The death of Brother Z. F. Freeman was also announced. He was a member of the executive board. Brother Freeman was an efficient member of the body, he had formerly been clerk. He was a distinguished educator. He had taught at Somerville, Danville and Moulton with great success, and had a high reputation as a teacher throughout north Alabama. He came to Alabama from Ohio. He married a most estimable lady in Morgan county, a Miss Garner. Though a northern man, when the war between the States came up, he espoused the side of the South and served as a soldier in the confederate army. He was respected and loved by all who knew him. Saturday before the first Sabbath in December was appointed as a day of thanksgiving and prayer. The total number of baptisms reported was 2710; baptisms, 366; contributions for missions during the year, \$464. Four missionaries had been in the field, for a portion of the time: M. A. Verser, six months; R. T. Wear, two months; J. R. Nesmith, 56 days; and R. A. Windes, two months; sermons preached by all of them, 224; baptisms, 115.

The board of trustees of the Female Institute at Moulton, reported that Elder J. L. Lattimore had retired from the position of principal of the school, and that Brother C. G. Lynch had been given the use of the school building and now had a school going on in it.

The fifty-fifth session was held with the Moulton Church, commencing on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1874. Elder J. R. Nesmith preached the introductory sermon. Elder J. Gunn was moderator and J. C. Roberts, clerk. Forty-three churches were represented. Nine new churches were received, viz: Mt. Olivet, in Morgan county; Oak Grove, Franklin county; Shady Grove, Colbert county; Mason's Chapel, Marshall county; County Line, Limestone county; Mission Grove, Harmony; Mt. Carmel and Tarrant's Chapel, Lawrence county.

Elder W. H. Bryan was received as a messenger from Big Bear Creek Association. Elder J. R. Graves, editor of *The Baptist*, Memphis, Tennessee, and Elder E. Y. Vanhoose, of Salem Association, Alabama, were present as visitors; \$513 was pledged for missions by churches and individuals. The churches had been wonderfully blessed during the year. Elder C. W. McClellan reported missionary work as follows: engaged eight months, preached eighty-four sermons, sold books to the amount of \$353.65. Elder R. A. Windes reported 231 sermons preached, sixty baptized, two churches organized and two deacons ordained. Elder M. A. Verser reported: engaged nine months, 113 sermons preached, twenty-five baptized, one church constituted, and seven Sunday Schools organized.

The colportage work had been entered upon this year; forty-two dollars in cash had been received, and \$345.91 had been invested in books, and \$57.65 for guide for col-

porteur, Brother C. W. McClellan, who was blind; \$312.65 had been paid back by the colporteur, and there were books on hand to the amount of \$62.85. This was a good showing and the work should have been continued, but for some reason no further effort was made. Every missionary we send in the field should be supplied with tracts, bibles and other religious books to circulate among the people. Our people need information, especially upon our peculiar doctrines. The report of the board of trustees of the Female Institute at Moulton stated, that since the resignation of Elder J. L. Lattimore, in 1873, no principal had been elected by the trustees, Prof. C. G. Lynch had taught in the building, by the assent of the trustees, on his own account, until May, 1874. Since then, Mr. W. T. Minor had been permitted to use the building for a school, which is still being carried on with success. The board has not been able to procure a principal under a formal engagement. The subject of this institution took up much of the time of the association. A committee of five was appointed to formulate a plan by which the institution could be sustained. That committee proposed that 100 shares of \$100 each should be secured on the scholarship plan. Every share should entitle its holder to four year's tuition of one pupil in the school free of tuition in the literary department, no certificates of stock to be given until the share was paid for, but the payment of one-fourth of the value of the share would entitle the subscriber to one year's tuition. An effort was made to secure subscribers on the plan proposed. About fifty shares were subscribed at this meeting, and a committee was appointed to get up the remainder. This committee, however, did not prosecute the work, and the plan failed. We are satisfied that if an active effort had been made throughout the associa-

tion, it would have proven a success. Elder J. R. Graves preached on the Sabbath to a crowded house, occupying about two hours and a half in the delivery of his sermon, and was listened to throughout with great interest and attention.

On motion of Jos. Shackelford, which was discussed at some length, the association agreed to unite with the Alabama Baptist State Convention, and sever its connection with the General Association of Middle Tennessee and North Alabama. Under the circumstances, we think this was the proper course to pursue. We were now connected with our south Alabama brethren by railroad. There was no good reason why the Baptists of the State should not all be in the same organization, and act together. When the General Association was organized things were different. We of north Alabama were nearer to the brethren of middle Tennessee and our interests were more identified with them than with the Baptists of the middle and southern parts of Alabama. Delegates were appointed to the convention, which met that year at Marion, November 13.

The Sunday School board reported that there were twenty-two Sunday Schools connected with the churches of the association, with a membership of 828 pupils; that Sabbath School conventions had been appointed to be held in each district during the next year. The same board was continued.

Resolutions commending Elder J. L. Lattimore, who was about to leave the State for Texas, were adopted. Total number of members reported, 3345; baptisms, 414; total mission fund, \$427.30; twenty-six ministers reported.

The fifty-sixth session convened at Hopewell Church, Morgan county, Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1875. Elder J. Gunn preached the introductory

sermon. Thirty-five churches were represented. Elder Gunn was moderator and J. C. Roberts, clerk. Two new churches were represented, viz: New Salem and New Friendship, in Morgan county. Elder J. J. D. Renfroe was received as a representative of the Alabama Baptist State Convention. The claims of Howard College were brought to the attention of the association by the report of the committee on education, and resolutions were adopted urging the Baptists of the association to contribute at least one dollar towards the endowment of that institution. Brother Renfroe was then making an effort to raise an endowment by getting every Baptist in the State to contribute at least one dollar. It was to be a "*centennial offering*," as the next year would be the 100th anniversary of the independence of the United States. The patriotism of Baptists was appealed to, in view of what our Baptist fathers had done for American liberty. The history of the sufferings of Baptists for religious liberty was presented to the people by our ministers everywhere, and it was thought that they would be aroused to a sense of their duty, and as it was supposed that there were at least 80,000 white Baptists in the State, some brethren thought that eighty or one hundred thousand dollars would be easily raised for Howard College, which institution was without an endowment, and dependent entirely on tuition fees to pay its professors.

Although the effort was an utter failure financially, yet good was done. Our people were informed about many things concerning the denomination that before they knew nothing. They were taught that Baptists had always been the advocates of religious liberty, and that they had suffered persecution for conscience sake, but had never been persecutors of any for their religious opinions; that they were always opposed to the union of

church and State, and would never receive aid from the State in the support of the ministry.

Dr. Renfroe, by his instructive sermons and addresses, did much to enlighten the Baptists of Alabama, and impress them with the importance of maintaining educational institutions and educating our rising ministry.

The association seemed impressed with the importance of doing something towards helping on the work in which Dr. Renfroe was engaged, and it appointed a committee to act in concert with the State centenary committee, to bring the matter before the churches, and to appoint mass meetings. A committee of five was also appointed to arrange for a great Baptist gathering on the 4th of July, 1876. Nothing of consequence came out of this movement in the association. A sufficient number of ministers could not be aroused to take interest in it. The whole thing was a financial failure in this association and throughout the State. Not more than enough money was collected to pay the expenses of those who were acting as agents. The idea was a good one, but the amount asked of each one was too small. Many who could have given from twenty-five dollars to \$100 contented themselves by giving all that was asked for, one dollar. While many felt themselves unable to give anything, and many did not, for a mere sentiment, feel willing to give to an institution about which they knew but little. The Baptists of north Alabama had never been identified with Howard College and did not appreciate its importance as they ought to have done, and as they do now.

The report on the state of religion was not so favorable as last year. Many churches were in a cold and indifferent state. This was attributable in part to the indifference of the ministry as stated in the report.

M. A. Verser, missionary, reported, engaged nine months, preached eighty-seven sermons, organized four Sunday Schools, baptized fifteen. J. R. Nesmith reported, engaged two and one-half months, preached forty-seven sermons, baptized twenty-nine, organized one church, ordained one minister. The Sunday School board reported the Sunday School work on the increase. Sunday School conventions were held during the year in each district. Number of Sunday Schools, twenty; membership, 600. A resolution was adopted requesting pastors to present the claims of foreign missions to their respective churches during the month of November, and take up collections for the same. The board of trustees of the Female Institute at Moulton was urged to open the school as soon as practicable. Rock Creek and Beech Grove Churches were granted letters of dismission. About \$360 was pledged for missions. A resolution approving of the appointment of Elder Jos. Shackelford as evangelist for north Alabama was adopted. Baptisms reported, 134.

CHAPTER IX.

FROM 1876 TO 1884.

THE fifty-seventh session was held with Town Creek Church, commencing Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1876. Elder C. W. Callahan preached the introductory sermon. Elder Jos. Shackelford was moderator and J. C. Roberts, clerk. Forty-one churches were represented. One new church was received, viz: Bethany, in Lawrence county. The committee on state of religion reported a general revival spirit among the churches during the past year.

M. A. Verser, missionary, reported; engaged 125 days, preached sixty-nine sermons. The following query was proposed: "What ought to be done with a church that holds in fellowship a minister who teaches open communion?" It was answered as follows: "We recommend the church to discipline her minister, and if not a member, dismiss him as pastor, and get one sound in the faith, and if the church continues to hold such minister and allows free communion among her members, she will not be admitted to membership in this body." The pledges for missions this year were only \$132. Brothers O. D. Gibson, J. Y. Shoemaker and A. J. Harris were appointed the executive board for the next year. Total number of members reported, 3047; baptisms, 267.

The fifty-eighth session convened at Blue Spring Church, Friday, before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1877. Deacon Charles Gibson was chosen moderator and

J. C. Roberts, clerk. One new church was received, Cedar Grove, Franklin county. A general revival spirit was reported as prevailing in the churches; \$234 was pledged for missions. M. A. Verser had been employed by the executive board for two months, and J. C. Roberts and C. W. McClellan for one month. No report of their work was given in the minutes. The board of trustees of the Female Institute at Moulton, reported that they had employed Mrs. Grace and Mrs. Pierce as teachers for the fall term, and the school numbered twenty-five young ladies. The committee on Sabbath Schools reported quite a decline in interest upon the part of the churches in Sabbath School work.

A committee was appointed to draw up a plan for the general support of Sabbath Schools. That committee, through its chairman, Dr. R. M. Cunningham, reported:

First, that the delegates present be requested to urge upon their respective churches the organization of a Sunday School.

Second, that said Sabbath School shall have a superintendent, singing master and secretary.

Third, that no class should have over six members.

Fourth, that the association appoint a general superintendent, to whom every school ought to report, giving the names of superintendent, singing master and secretary with the number of pupils, male and female, for every quarter. And that the general superintendent make an annual report to the association, giving all the information concerning the Sunday School work, that he may be able to obtain. And that the Sunday Schools send up to the association funds sufficient to cover all expenses incurred by the superintendent in attending to this work.

Some of these were good suggestions, but they were never carried out. The association had failed to continue

the Sunday School board, and hence a decline in Sunday School interest. The number of baptisms this year was 124.

The fifty-ninth session convened with Mt. Pisgah Church, Morgan county, on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1878. Elder W. B. Carter preached the introductory sermon. Elder J. Gunn was moderator and J. C. Roberts, clerk. Correspondence was opened with Mt. Carmel Association, a new body recently organized in part from churches of this association. Elder B. W. Whilden was recognized as a representative of *The Alabama Baptist*. The report of the committee on "State of Religion" represented the churches as being in a good spiritual condition. It also stated that "our experience and observation is, that in point of intelligent Christianity our churches have advanced at least one hundred per cent. in the last ten years." The report of the board of trustees of the Female Institute at Moulton stated that Prof. C. G. Lynch and lady were conducting the school, with about forty pupils. Rev. J. S. Gibson, missionary, reported, engaged two months, preached twenty-five sermons, collected \$52.10.

Elder B. W. Whilden had been employed by the board as an evangelist for five months. He reported ninety-one sermons preached, sixty-two addresses delivered. Brother Whilden was formerly a missionary to China. He was an acceptable minister and the executive board commended him and his work very highly. During the fall of this year, the yellow fever prevailed in Decatur and in other places in the Tennessee Valley. It broke out in Memphis, Tennessee, in September and soon spread along the lines of railroad from that city into Mississippi and north Alabama. There was a general discontinuance of travel and the people all over the country were much

alarmed. Everybody that could left those places where it prevailed. Decatur suffered very much. About the time the association met at Mt. Pisgah, which was only seven miles from Decatur, the epidemic was at its worst, and there was general alarm among the people, the result was that the representation from the churches was small. Only twenty-two churches were represented, and these by about fifty delegates.

The following preamble and resolutions offered by Brother J. C. Orr were adopted :

“Whereas, a dreadful scourge is sweeping over our land, and our fellow men are falling upon the right and upon the left, whether prepared or unprepared, therefore, be it resolved, that it is with painful forebodings for the future, we contemplate the tardiness of our rulers in calling upon the people to go in humiliation and prayer to the Great Physician who alone is able to heal them.

“Resolved, that it is the sense of this body, that none but good and true men, who love and serve God, should be chosen as civil officers to direct our destinies.”

The death of Elder M. A. Verser, “our trusted and tried missionary” was announced. Suitable mention was made of his death in the minutes, and Elder J. Gunn was appointed to preach a sermon in his memory on Saturday of the next association at eleven a. m., and Elder J. C. Vincent, alternate. The sum of \$375.15 was collected and pledged for missions for the next year. Also the proceeds for one and a half acres of cotton and three acres of wheat were pledged by Brethren J. C. Hartsell, E. R. Stanley, J. C. Vincent, A. H. Stanley, John Hale and D. J. Orr.

The executive board for the next year was A. J. Harris, chairman, W. D. McDaniel, Chas. Gibson, J. C. Orr, E. R. Stanley, and was located at Moulton. Three

churches were granted letters of dismissal, viz: Mt. Tabor, in Marshall, Bethlehem and Mt. Olivet, in Morgan.

The sixtieth session was held at Bethel Church, in Lawrence county, commencing Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1879. Elder S. R. C. Adams preached the introductory sermon. Elder J. Gunn was moderator and Jos. Shackelford, clerk. Thirty-four churches were represented. One new church, Macedonia, Morgan county, was received. A board of ministerial education was appointed at this meeting, whose duty it was to search out such young men who have the ministry in view, and who are approved by their churches, and raise money from the churches to aid them in securing an education. The board consisted of the following brethren: J. Gunn, Jos. Shackelford, O. D. Gibson, J. S. Hale, L. K. Burt, C. G. Lynch and Jourdan White. The sum of \$265 was pledged by the churches for ministerial education. The association adopted strong resolutions in favor of temperance. The deaths of Elders W. W. Wilhite and W. H. Bryan were announced. Elder J. C. Roberts was appointed to preach a sermon in memory of these brethren at the next association. Elder Wilhite had been actively employed in the ministry for a number of years. He had been a missionary of the association and at one time its clerk. He had been pastor of Enon, Hopewell and Lebanon Churches for a number of years. He was an earnest preacher and did faithful work. Brother Bryan was a modest and unassuming man in his disposition. He was not actively engaged in the ministry. Brother Isaac N. Owen, who had long been the treasurer of the association, resigned his position having removed to Nashville, Tennessee.

Resolutions of thanks for his faithful services were unanimously adopted. Brother Owen was a model man.

prayer meetings, baptized seven, baptized by others in meetings attended by him, sixty, constituted two new churches, erected one house of worship, received \$119.75 on the field. The board of ministerial education reported \$88.90 received and the same paid out for Brother C. W. Hare, ministerial student. The same board was continued, except that Elder J. I. Stockton was appointed in place of Brother L. K. Burt, deceased. The sum of \$365.80 was pledged and collected for missions for the next year; \$14.45 was collected for the widow of Brother Verser; total membership reported, 2831; baptisms, 280; total contributions for the year, \$376.68.

The sixty-third session was held with the Russellville Church, commencing on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1882. Elder S. R. C. Adams preached the introductory sermon. Elder J. Gunn was moderator and Jos. Shackelford, clerk. Forty churches were represented. Two new churches were received, viz: Mt. Moriah, in Colbert county, and Liberty Hill, in Franklin county. Elder W. C. Cleveland, president of the State mission board and editor of the *Alabama Baptist*, and Elder Martin L. Ball, general evangelist of the State mission board were present; also Elder C. W. McClellan, from Mt. Carmel Association, and Elders J. S. Stockton and J. O. E. Pace from Big Bear Creek Association, were received as correspondents. Brother B. S. Roden from Clear Creek Association, and Elder B. F. Finney from Mississippi were received as visiting brethren.

Elder S. R. C. Adams was the missionary for the past year. He reported 177 sermons preached, labored ten months. Three Sunday Schools organized, baptized twelve, baptized by others in connection with his labors, twenty-nine; sold Baptist literature, \$146.95. The board

commended the energy and zeal shown by Brother Adams in his work.

Brother C. G. Lynch was reported as still having charge of the Female Institute at Moulton, with forty or fifty pupils. Pledges and collections were taken for ministerial education, amounting to \$202. The board reported no application for aid, but was informed that there were several young men who desired help to prepare themselves for the ministry. Pledges and collections for missions amounted to \$840.05. This was a considerable increase over the last year. The following resolution by Brother J. C. Orr was adopted :

“Resolved, that it is not Baptist usage for churches *to merely drop* the names of their members, but to withdraw church fellowship from such as walk disorderly.”

The report on state of religion stated that the letters from the churches indicated that “the cause of our blessed Redeemer is flourishing in most parts of the association.” The contributions for missions at this meeting were by resolution divided as follows: Foreign missions, \$100; State mission, \$150; colportage and bible work, \$30; home mission board at Atlanta, \$25—the remainder to associational missions. The following brethren were appointed on the executive board: Charles Gibson, O. D. Gibson, W. D. McDaniel, P. J. Hutchinson and T. W. Lynch, the latter was continued as treasurer. The following resolution, offered by J. C. Roberts, was adopted :

“Resolved, that this association, through her moderator, appoint a committee to draw up a memorial to be sent to the next legislature of the State of Alabama, asking that body to take into consideration the liquor question, and pass such laws, as in their wisdom may tend to stop the sale and manufacture of intoxicating liquors in our State.”

The committee was appointed, but the legislature would only enact local laws prohibiting the sale of intoxicating drinks in certain localities, where the citizens desired it, but no general law has been passed up to this time.

The finance committee reported the total amount of money received at this meeting for all purposes, \$547.05. Of this \$68.40 was for minutes and clerk's fee. Total membership reported, 3056 ; baptisms, 234.

The sixty-fourth session convened with Enon Church, Lawrence county, Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1883. Elder Mat Lyon preached the introductory sermon. J. Gunn was moderator and Jos. Shackelford clerk. Forty-three churches were represented. Two new churches were received, viz: Tharps Spring, in Colbert county, and Hartsell, in Morgan. Two letters were read, purporting to be from Rocky Creek Church, Morgan county, and two sets of delegates presented themselves. The letters were referred to a special committee of five to determine which set of delegates should be received. There was also a letter from Etha Church, in Cullman county, asking for admission into the association. There was some irregularity in the letter and it was referred to the same committee. This committee reported in favor of receiving Etha Church, and it was received.

On the Rocky Creek letters, the committee reported, "that the minority party be received, and that though the letters of the majority party lacked regularity, yet that their delegates be received." This report caused a lengthy discussion. It was evident that the association could not accept the recommendation of the committee. The church had divided, and each party had sent delegates claiming to be sent by Rocky Creek Church. Both could not be received. There was a want of fellowship between the two parties. After considerable discus-

sion on Saturday, the matter was laid over until Monday. In the meantime, by the efforts of brethren, the trouble between the two parties was settled, and the following communication was presented to the association on Monday:

“We, the delegates represented by the letters from Rocky Creek Church, designated numbers one and two, do hereby make the following agreement: We are willing to acknowledge before this association and each other, that we are sorry for the wrong we each may have committed, and do humbly beg the other’s pardon. We, the delegates represented by letter number two, are willing to come back to missionary principles, so far as we have departed from them, and are, furthermore, willing to go back to Rocky Creek Church and say to the church that we are willing to co-operate with the association, and moreover, if any member at any time wishes to leave our church and join another of the same faith and order, we will grant them a letter and let them go peaceably from us, and we select S. L. Weaver, John W. Hood and J. E. Weaver as our delegates in this body.”

Signed by W. T. Maples, W. H. Nunn, J. E. Weaver, J. W. Hood, delegates; S. L. Weaver, O. D. Gibson, W. M. Roan, T. J. Weaver, witnesses.

This being a satisfactory settlement between the contending parties, the delegates recommended were received. This was not exactly the right method to pursue. These parties themselves did not have the authority to settle the matter that way, but as they were the influential members of both factions, it was presumed that they could influence the church to agree to what they might do in the premises. The association was satisfied, if they were.

Elders B. F. Riley, of the *Alabama Baptist*, and J. M. Robertson, of the *Baptist Reflector*, Chattanooga, Tennes-

see ; and Brother J. H. Neal, of Washington Association, Georgia, were received as visiting brethren ; A. C. Burns was received as a correspondent from Sulphur Springs Association, Alabama, also Brother John W. Heatherly, from the same association.

The board of trustees of the Female Institute at Moulton reported that Brother C. G. Lynch was still in charge of that institution with fifty pupils.

The death of Deacon Charles Gibson, a member of the executive board, was announced. Brother Gibson had been one of the working members of the association for many years. He had been chairman of the executive board for a long time, and was at one time moderator of the association. We give here the memorial tribute prepared by a committee appointed by the association and printed in the minutes of 1883.

MEMORIAL TRIBUTE.

(To the memory of the HON. CHARLES GIBSON.)

At the annual session of the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association, held in October, 1883, the delegates from Enon and Moulton Churches, together with the deacons of Enon Church, were appointed a committee to prepare a memorial tribute to the memory of our beloved brother, the HON. CHARLES GIBSON, deceased. The memory of Brother Gibson is embalmed in the hearts of hundreds of dear friends, and it is thought appropriate to give in our minutes an expressive testimonial of the regard held for his Christian virtues on the part of this association.

Brother Gibson was a native of Georgia. In early life he became a citizen of Alabama, and he was for nearly forty years an active member of Enon Church, in Lawrence county. He was for many years an efficient and faithful deacon of that church. He was regularly a delegate to the association, and was prompt in attendance and earnest in duty. In 1877, he presided over this body with efficiency and dignity. He was long a member of our executive board, and he held that appointment at the time of his death. His wise, conservative counsels, and his energy in business had a wholesome influence in the management of our missionary work.

In civil life, as in religious, Brother Gibson was a man of decided

convictions, and was candid and fearless in expressing them. He occupied different official positions, and was faithful in all. He was at one time judge of probate of Lawrence county, and in 1875, he was a member of the Constitutional Convention of the State. Conscientious and honest, despising hypocrisy, and with a strong intellect, not easily deceived or misled, his leading idea in morals was, TO DO RIGHT in all things; and we are persuaded that few, if any, have surpassed him in this regard.

Brother Gibson was judicious and habitual in his contributions for religious objects, he was lenient toward debtors, and was ever mindful of his duty to the widow and the orphan. He was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. His habits of life were pure; he was always ready to speak a word for his Divine Master, and his earnest, pathetic voice was often heard in prayer in our public assemblies. In the endearing relations of husband and father, his example and his counsels are his best encomium.

Brother Gibson's residence for a number of years was at Moulton, where, at the age of 81 years, 2 months, and 1 day, he died, on the 16th day of May, 1883, and where his widow, our honored sister Phoebe Gibson, still resides. In harmony with the "Tribute of Respect," adopted by his church, we may truly say, that not only has that church sustained a great loss, but our entire community will feel that by his departure they are deprived of a worthy citizen, a safe counselor, and a tried friend.

"Servant of God, well done.

Rest from thy loved employ;
The battle fought, the victory won;
Enter thy Master's joy."

J. W. KEYS.

Senior Deacon of Enon Church, and Chairman of the Committee, on behalf of the Committee.

The board of ministerial education reported that it had received \$90.40 and had paid out for the support of Brother John Speer, a ministerial student at Mountain View High School, \$79.50. It recommended the association to aid Brother Jos. E. Herring, a ministerial student at Howard College, which was done. The old board was reappointed. Pledges and collections were taken for ministerial education for the next year, amounting to \$86.10.

The total amount received for missions for the past

year was \$641.85; amount paid out, \$544. This money was divided between the different boards: \$100 to foreign mission, \$100 to home missions, \$100 to State missions, \$25 to colportage fund and the remainder to associational missions. Brothers Adams and Speer were the missionaries for the past year. Brother Adams was employed for eleven months and Brother Speer two months. Their consolidated reports give 170 sermons preached; baptisms, twenty-six; three Sabbath Schools organized; Baptist books sold, \$50. The pledges and cash obtained for missions for the next year were \$828.75. It was resolved that the association place itself in such connection with the State mission board, as to be able to secure missionary pastors for those churches or places which may be termed centers of influence, and that an effort be made to increase our contributions to missions, so as to be able to devote one half to the sustenance of these centers. A new executive board was appointed consisting of Brothers O. D. Gibson, W. D. McDaniel, T. W. Lynch, P. J. Hutchinson, Mat. Lyon, Wm. Irwin and C. G. Lynch. They were instructed to take the management of the missionary work of the association and co-operate with the State mission board. Brother T. W. Lynch was appointed treasurer. Ten dollars were contributed to sister Verser, widow of M. A. Verser, deceased. Total membership reported, 3184; baptisms, 141. Total funds reported by the finance committee, as being received for all purposes, \$897.20, of this \$73 was for minutes and clerk's fee; Sunday Schools reported, twelve. There was no report at this meeting on state of religion. The small number of baptisms indicated that the churches had not enjoyed much of a revival spirit. The spirit of benevolence seemed to be good from the contributions reported.

The sixty-fifth session was held with the Hillsboro Church, Lawrence county, commencing Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1884. The introductory sermon was preached by Elder W. B. Carter. Elder W. B. Carter was moderator and Jos. Shackelford, clerk. Thirty-eight churches were represented. Two new churches were received, viz: Danville, in Morgan county, and Zion in Lawrence county. The following correspondents from sister associations were received: G. W. Crisco, from Mt. Carmel, Elders W. O. Bailey, J. T. McCandless and Brother W. W. Pearson, from Liberty Association. The board of trustees of the Female Institute at Moulton reported the school still in charge of Brother C. G. Lynch with sixty pupils, and the prospect more flattering than for a number of years.

The treasurer's report showed that \$873.10 had been received for missions, and \$500 paid out, leaving over \$300 in the treasury. This was unprecedented. The board of ministerial education reported \$111.15 received, and \$85.30 paid out for the support of Brother John Speer. These reports indicated a better financial condition than the association had ever been in before. For the next year, \$187 was pledged for ministerial education, and \$803.35 for missions.

The missionaries employed for the past year, were Brothers M. Lyon, J. I. Stockton, T. J. Weaver and John Speer. Brother Lyon reported, engaged one half of his time for six months, preached seventy sermons. Brother Stockton reported, engaged eleven months, serving two churches besides, preached 122 sermons, baptized two, organized one Sabbath School. Brother Weaver reported engaged five and two-thirds months, preached 139 sermons, baptized five, ordained two deacons, organized one Sabbath School. Brother Speer reported employed two

months, preached forty sermons, baptized six. Brother J. Gunn also labored as an evangelist among the churches two and one-half months. The old executive board and treasurer were continued, with the addition of two members, Brothers L. M. Wear and John Moore. The old board of ministerial education was reappointed. The association took high ground on the subject of temperance—in advance to some extent, of what it had ever done before. It recommended the churches to disapprove of their members using intoxicating liquors as a beverage, and that they do not hold in fellowship any who sell liquor as a beverage either as owner or clerk, and pronounced as wrong the signing of recommendations of liquor sellers. At this meeting a resolution was adopted to raise a colportage fund of \$100, to be called the Charles Gibson fund. Money was directed to be appropriated to this fund out of the general fund. But it seems that the executive board and treasurer never understood the resolution. At any rate they never carried out the resolution. It is to be regretted very much that this was never done. Such a fund can be made productive of a great deal of good in the circulating of good religious literature among the people. The finance committee reported \$1229.70 sent up for all purposes. The association ordered that \$100 each should be paid to the Foreign, Home and State mission boards out of funds raised for the next year.

Bethlehem Church was granted a letter of dismissal. The report of the committee on state of religion showed that the churches were in a prosperous condition. Total membership reported, 3327; baptisms, 260; ministers, twenty-six; churches, forty-six. This was an interesting and profitable session.

CHAPTER X.

FROM 1885 TO 1888.

THE sixty-sixth session convened with the Moulton Church on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1885. Elder R. T. Wear preached the introductory sermon. Elder Mat. Lyon was moderator and Jos. Shackelford, clerk. Thirty-seven churches were represented. Elder J. O. A. Pace was present as a correspondent from Big Bear Creek Association. The treasurer's report showed \$1060.40 had been received for missionary purposes, and \$1036 had been paid out; \$791.65 were pledged and collected for the next year for missions. The following preamble and resolution, offered by Jos. Shackelford, was adopted:

"Whereas, there exists within the bounds of the Muscle Shoals Association a number of villages, towns and country places which are destitute of Baptist churches and Baptist preaching, or having very weak churches; and, whereas, these places are centers of trade, population, talent, education and influence, therefore, be it resolved, that it is the sense of this body, that these places should be occupied by Baptists, and that a good part of our mission money should be expended in preaching to the people, where the people live, and therefore can assemble for worship and Sunday School."

The association had been spending a good deal of money in paying missionaries to ride over the country and preach, neglecting to a very great extent those places

that were centers of population where there were no Baptist churches, or very weak ones. The object of this resolution was to bring about a change in our plan of operations. It effected this to some extent, but not to the extent that was desirable. Since then, the towns within our bounds, some of them, have grown to be cities, we need Baptist preaching in them more than ever. The association should cultivate these places, help the feeble churches, and send ministers to those that have no Baptist church.

Elder John Speer, missionary, reported, engaged seven and two-thirds months, preached ninety-four sermons, baptized fifteen, organized four Sabbath Schools and one church. Elder Mat. Lyon reported, employed eight months, preached eighty-two sermons, baptized six persons. Elder S. R. C. Adams reported, engaged eight months, preached 195 sermons, baptized twenty-seven. The board of ministerial education reported that \$140.70 had been collected, and \$132.28 had been paid out, of which amount \$40.28 had been paid to Brother Jos. E. Herring, a ministerial student at Howard College, Marion, Alabama, and the remainder to Brother W. T. Cobbs, a ministerial student at Mountain View High School; \$171 was pledged for ministerial education, and the same board continued.

The death of Elder J. C. Roberts, former clerk of the association was announced. The association spent thirty minutes in memorial services in memory of Brother Roberts, and adopted suitable resolutions concerning his death, which we give in another place in the sketch of his life.

The committee on state of religion reported that a goodly number of churches had reported revivals during the year, and the churches generally were in good spirit-

ual condition. There was raised for Sister Roberts, widow of Brother J. C. Roberts, \$18.45. The finance committee reported \$775.65 sent up by the churches for missions and education. The association appropriated \$100 to aid Hartsell Church. It had previously aided Decatur Church for two years, by an appropriation of a hundred dollars each year. This was timely help. Those churches have, since that time, been paying back to the association in their contributions to missions, more than they received. Fifty dollars was appropriated to each of the boards of the Southern Baptist Convention, Home and Foreign, and fifty dollars to the State Mission board. Forty churches were in union. Total membership, 3027; baptisms, 191. The board of trustees of the Female Institute at Moulton reported that Brother C. G. Lynch still had charge of the institution, and was "conducting a school for boys and girls."

Jos. Shackelford offered the following resolutions, which were adopted: "Resolved, that the trustees of the Baptist Female Institute at Moulton be instructed to take into consideration the question whether the institute shall be made a school for boys and girls, or whether it shall be taught as a female school. And, if, in their judgment, it will be best to have it as a mixed school for boys and girls, they are authorized to have the charter changed to that effect."

"Resolved, further, that the trustees be instructed, that whether the school be taught as a mixed school or a female school, they shall elect the teachers of the same, and shall see that the building is kept in good repair."

There had been some neglect upon the part of the association in appointing trustees for the institute, and a resolution was passed to appoint all the trustees, twelve in number, in classes of four each, which was done as follows: for

one year, W. D. McDaniel, W. T. Pruitt, W. D. Irwin, S. R. C. Adams. Time expires in 1886. For two years, H. B. Irwin, T. W. Lynch, R. T. Wear and John C. Orr. Time expires in 1887. For three years, M. Lyon, T. Jones, J. S. Gibson and N. G. Dillashaw. Time expires in 1888. The old executive board and the treasurer were reappointed.

The sixty-seventh session convened with the Hartsell Church on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1886. Elder J. R. Nesmith preached the introductory sermon. Elder J. Gunn was moderator and Jos. Shackelford, clerk. Thirty-five churches were represented. One new church was received, viz: Antioch, Colbert county. Elder W. B. Crumpton, corresponding secretary of the State mission board, and J. W. Trotter, of Sulphur Springs Association; W. W. Pearson, Perry Henderson, of Liberty Association; G. W. Crisco, of Mt. Carmel Association; Elder P. M. Musgrove, of Cullman Association; G. T. Green, of Canaan Association; and Maj. J. G. Harris, editor of the *Alabama Baptist*, were present as visitors and were invited to seats; \$814.55 were pledged and part paid, for missions for the next year, and \$193.05 for ministerial education.

The report of the board of ministerial education showed that Brother W. T. Cobbs had been continued at the Mountain View High School, and \$104.31 had been collected and paid for his support. The board was continued except that Dr. J. E. Smith and Professor H. C. Gilbert and W. H. Burt were appointed in the places of Brothers C. G. Lynch and Jourdan White and J. I. Stockton.

The following resolution was adopted as a standing rule of the association:

"Resolved, that the executive board be authorized in case of necessity, from epidemics or other sufficient cause

to change the time and place or both of holding the session of the association, and also to supply all vacancies in annual appointments for preaching, and to substitute other appointees when in their judgment the interest of the cause of Christ may demand such change."

Quarterly collections and the envelope system were recommended to the churches. The executive board was also instructed to hold quarterly meetings at different churches in the association. Total abstinence from intoxicating drinks was recommended, and pastors were requested to preach on the subject of temperance at least once within the next three months. To the Foreign, Home and State mission boards, \$50 each was appropriated. The finance committee reported \$769.56 as paid in for all purposes, \$10.55 of this was for Sister Verser. Brother J. I. Stockton, missionary, reported, engaged for three weeks in each of the past nine months, preached 136 sermons, fourteen baptized in connection with his labors. Brother M. Lyon, missionary, reported, employed for one half of his time, occupied 124 days, preached sixty-eight sermons, baptized four, sold \$16.92 worth of religious books. Brother John Speer, missionary, reported, preached 127 sermons, held six protracted meetings, baptized seven. The old executive board was continued, and T. W. Lynch as treasurer. Brothers W. D. McDaniel, W. T. Pruitt, W. D. Irwin and S. R. C. Adams were elected members of the board of trustees of the institute at Moulton for three years, time expires in 1889. There was no report on state of religion. A committee was appointed but did not report, cause not given. Total membership, 3044; baptisms, 201; forty churches, and twenty-nine ordained ministers. Only nineteen churches reported Sabbath Schools, with 467 teachers and pupils.

The sixty-eighth session was held with the Town Creek Church, Lawrence county, commencing Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1887. Elder Jos. Shackelford preached the introductory sermon. J. Gunn was moderator and Jos. Shackelford, clerk. Thirty-four churches were represented. Elder R. T. Wear, pastor of Town Creek Church, made an address of welcome, which was responded to by the moderator. Six new churches were received, viz: Falkville, Somerville, in Morgan county; Mt. Stanley and Mt. Hope, in Lawrence county; Tharp's Spring and Sheffield, in Colbert county. A letter was presented from a body calling itself "Antioch Church," in Morgan county. In the letter it was stated that they were "so-called excluded members" from Mt. Pisgah Church. A committee was appointed to look into the matter, and report whether the body calling itself Antioch Church could be received. The committee after examination, finding that the members representing themselves as Antioch Church had been excluded from Mt. Pisgah Church, a church in union with the association, reported against receiving said organization into the association. The report of the committee was adopted. Pledges and collections were taken up for missions for the next year, amounting to \$716.75.

Elder Mat. Lyon, missionary, reported, labored eighty-six days, preached forty sermons, sold thirteen colportage books. Elder John Speer reported, employed for eight months, preached fifty-four sermons, delivered twenty-two exhortations, assisted in organizing two churches. Elder T. J. Weaver, reported, that he had devoted most of his time (seven and one-half months—one half of his time) to Somerville, Falksville and Poteet's school house; organized a church at Somerville and at Falkville, ninety-five conversions and ninety additions to the churches in

meetings attended by him. Raised for church building and repairs, \$400; raised for missions, \$15.

Brother A. J. Harris of Nashville, Tennessee, formerly a member of this association, and chairman of its executive board, being present, addressed the association, by request, in the Sunday School meeting on Sabbath morning, in a warm and earnest speech. It gave pleasure to the brethren to greet one whom they loved and esteemed so highly for his work's sake.

The report of the board of ministerial education showed that \$100.26 had been received, and paid out for the support of Brothers W. T. Cobbs and John Speer, ministerial students at Mountain View High School. For the next year \$159 was paid and pledged for ministerial education. A new board was appointed and located at Moulton, consisting of Brothers J. Gunn, T. W. Lynch, Wm. Irwin, Thos. Hutchinson, Jourdan White, J. G. Orr and J. W. Hargrove.

The death of Elder S. M. Steenson and also of Elder Wm. Hightower was announced, and suitable mention was made of the same in the minutes, and business was suspended for a short time, and the hymn, "How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord," etc., was sung. The old executive board and treasurer were reappointed. The committee on documents reported that a majority of the churches had received additions by baptism, but there was a decrease in the number of Sunday Schools and a decrease in the pledges for missions.

The committee on state of religion reported that our religious state is on the decrease in some parts, while in other parts it is advancing. The *Alabama Baptist* under the management of Shackelford and Hare was recommended to the patronage of the membership. The finance committee reported total amount received for all

purposes, \$555.20. This was a considerable decline from last year. Total churches in union, forty-four; baptisms, 191; total membership, 3196; ordained ministers, twenty-seven; total contributions for all purposes, \$773.25. There is some discrepancy between this and the amount reported by the finance committee. This arises from the fact, that some churches reported in their letters amounts contributed through the year for benevolent purposes, that were not reported to the finance committee. The following amounts were reported—this, however, is only from a few churches: church expenses, \$431 (this is for repairs, sextons and lights and fuel); value of church property, \$10650; pastor's salaries, \$1140.75.

The sixty-ninth session of the association was held with the Russellville Church, commencing Friday before the first Lord's Day, in November, 1888. The change in the time of meeting was owing to the fact, that yellow fever was prevailing at Decatur, during the fall of the year, commencing in September, and was still prevailing. There was great excitement all over the country—much greater than in 1878. And every town and county and village was quarantined. It was difficult for anyone to travel. The executive board postponed the time of meeting one month. The result was that there was not a very large representation, though much larger than we expected. Thirty-four churches were represented. The introductory sermon was preached by Elder J. Gunn. He was also the moderator and Jos. Shackelford, clerk. The following correspondents and visiting brethren were present: Elder W. A. Agee, from Big Bear Creek Association, Elder John H. Pool, from North River Association, Elder J. B. Huckabee, from New River Association, Elder John P. Shaffer, agent for Howard college, Elder C. W. Hare, editor of the *Alabama Baptist*, Elder B. F.

Riley, D. D., president of the Howard college and Elder J. W. Stewart, of Birmingham. Elder D. W. Gwin, D. D., of Decatur, was elected a delegate of the Southern Baptist convention to convene at Memphis, May, 1889. The board of trustees of the institute at Moulton reported, that Professor C. G. Lynch had charge of the school, assisted by Miss Vallie Williams, now called the "Male and Female Institute," according to an act of the legislature changing the name. More than sixty pupils were in attendance. Professor Howerton had been the principal previous to this for one year.

Prof. C. G. Lynch offered an amendment to the constitution of the association so as to make the members of the executive board members of the association during their term of office. It was laid over until the next meeting; \$30.60 was raised for Howard College. The board of ministerial education reported \$85.10 received, and \$79.20 paid out for the support of Brother H. J. Halbroks, a ministerial student attending school at Hartsell, and a balance due Brothers Cobbs and Speer. Pledges and collections were taken for ministerial education, amounting to \$121.30. The treasurer's report showed \$586.90 had been received for missions, and \$515.05 had been paid out; \$776.50 was pledged for missions for the next year. The missionaries reported as follows: T. J. Weaver, employed for one-half his time, witnessed sixty-five conversions, had been in nine protracted meetings. Elder John Speer preached thirty sermons, gave one-fourth of his time, Saturday and Sunday preaching at Leighton and Town Creek, afterwards, in April, his work was transferred to New Decatur. Elder Mat. Lyon, employed to preach two Sundays in each month, from April to the first of October, preached twenty-two times.

Elder W. B. Carter, employed by the board to look after some churches in the Tennessee Valley did so, and reported the necessity of having some good men in that field.

The plan of missionary work had been somewhat changed, and the board, acting upon the recommendation of the association, was endeavoring to supply certain central points, instead of having their missionaries riding all over the country, and visiting a place not more than two or three times during the year. The work done by the missionaries had been much more effective under this plan, and it is to be hoped that it will be continued until every destitute locality is supplied with the gospel. A collection was taken up on Sabbath for the Decatur sufferers, amounting to fifty-three dollars. The old executive board was appointed with the exception that Brothers Wm. East and N. G. Dilleshaw were appointed in the places of Brothers Moore and Wear, and Brother A. W. Bailey was added to the board. The board was instructed to pay seventy-five dollars each to the Foreign and Home mission boards, and \$150 to the State mission board. The finance committee reported \$745.15 received; total membership reported, 2986. This falling off is due to the fact that ten churches were not represented, and there was no report from them, besides some of the churches had been dropping names from their rolls; baptisms, 147.

CHURCH INDEPENDENCE AND ASSOCIATIONAL AUTHORITY.

The following resolutions were offered by Elder Jos. Shackelford and unanimously adopted. The object of these resolutions was to place before the churches the opinion of the association upon certain matters that were

agitating some of the churches. Churches in certain portions of the associations were being troubled on the question of church authority, and the authority of the association to interfere with the internal affairs of the churches. Divisions were imminent. It was thought proper that the association should clearly set forth the true Baptist doctrine upon this subject. The same sentiments had been expressed before by the association, but as very few had the old minutes, the great mass of the membership were ignorant of the usages and customs of our fathers. Again, a great many Baptists, who were familiar with the workings of the church government among our Methodist and Presbyterian brethren, had the idea that a Baptist association was a kind of ecclesiastical court to which appeals could be carried from the action of the churches, and that church action could be annulled by the association. Some, indeed, were so ignorant, even among our own people, as to think the association was a kind of Methodist conference that sent ministers to the different churches. These, as a matter of course, were very few and had not been Baptists long. To inform our own people as to our ideas of church government and associational authority was the object of these resolutions. We think they are in full accord with the Baptist idea from the earliest recorded opinion of our Baptist fathers down to the present time.

RESOLUTIONS.

Resolved, that it is the sense of this association that each church has the right to control its own affairs in its own way, according to the scriptures, and that in all matters of discipline, the churches have the sole authority to act, and their action is final.

Resolved 2, that this association is only an advisory body, and claims no authority to interfere with the internal affairs of the churches, or to exercise any control over them in the management of their inter-

nal affairs, except in matters where they depart from the faith; and that this association reserves the right to withdraw fellowship from any church that departs from the faith, or from the established usages and practices of our denomination.

Resolved 3, that it is the opinion of this association that it is unbaptistic for churches or ministers to recognize as Baptist churches, those bodies who are excluded members of Baptist churches, believing that such recognition is destructive to all church government.

Resolved 4, that it is the judgment of this association that when one church has a matter of grievance against another church of this association, it is the duty of the aggrieved church to state to the offending church the matter of grievance and ask for redress. If that church will not hear or right the wrong, then to ask other churches to assist in reconciling the matter, and if this does not avail, then the matter can be brought before the association for settlement of the question as to which of those two churches, if either, the association will retain in her fellowship. In this, however, we, as an association, do not assume or claim to be a court of appeals for the churches, but simply to settle a matter of fellowship between constituent members upon gospel principles.

Value of church property as reported, \$15100; church expenses for building and repairs, \$2350; pastor's salaries, \$1335; only twelve churches reported. The committee on state of religion reported that the church letters showed that a majority of the churches had experienced revivals.

CHAPTER XI.

FROM 1889 TO 1890.

THE seventieth session was held with the church at Danville, commencing on Friday before the first Lord's Day, in October, 1889. Forty-four churches were represented. The introductory sermon was preached by Elder R. T. Wear. Elder J. Gunn was moderator and Jos. Shackelford, clerk. Three new churches were received, viz: New Prospect and Leighton, in Lawrence county, and Valhermosa Springs, in Morgan county. Elder D. I. Purser, financial agent for Howard College, was present in the interest of that institution. A query was presented from Lebanon Church to the following effect: "What should a church do with one of its members, who was an ordained minister, and who was acting as pastor to a body which claimed to be a Baptist church, which body was composed of excluded members from Mt. Pisgah Church, a member of this association, and which body the association had refused to receive?" This was the so-called Antioch Church, heretofore referred to. The association appointed a committee to answer the query. That committee reported the following, which was adopted: "We, your committee appointed to answer the query propounded from Lebanon Church, in reference to Brother J. N. Thompson pastoring the Antioch church, so-called, and administering the communion and receiving members into the fellowship of said so-called church, which body is composed principally of excluded members from Mt. Pis-

gah Church, and he, Thompson, holds his membership in Lebanon Church, beg leave to submit the following as our report: We think it a matter entirely of church discipline with Lebanon Church, and if Lebanon Church is not fully persuaded in her own mind as to the proper course to pursue, we would suggest and advise Lebanon Church to solicit the aid of two or three of her neighboring sister churches and confer with them, remembering that in the multitude of counsel there is safety, and therefore wisdom. We would refer Lebanon Church to the resolutions offered by Elder Josephus Shackelford, on page 8 of the minutes of the association of last year, which cover all the ground, and which were unanimously adopted by the association."

Respectfully submitted,

Signed by O. D. Gibson, T. R. Bragg, J. S. Gibson,
Committee.

Elder Jos. Shackelford was appointed a delegate to the Southern Baptist Convention to convene at Fort Worth, Texas, in May, 1890. Prof. C. G. Lynch was reported by the trustees as being in charge of the institute at Moulton, with sixty-seven pupils. H. J. Remington, J. N. Bragg and J. M. Sandlin were appointed trustees for the term ending 1892.

The board of ministerial education reported \$92.60 received for ministerial education, and \$110 paid out for the support of Brother H. J. Halbrooks, at Hartsell High School, \$192.82 was pledged and part paid for ministerial education for the next year. The board was continued.

Elder D. I. Purser addressed the association on the subject of education, and was permitted to take subscriptions to aid in the erection of the main building of Howard College, at East Lake. He secured \$1025 in cash notes and land. The report on education, read by Prof.

J. C. Tidwell, urged on the denomination the support of the Judson Female Institute at Marion and Howard College, and the building up of schools of high order, both male and female, within the bounds of the association.

There was \$722.02 collected and pledged for missions for the next year. The executive board and treasurer were reappointed and Brothers A. L. Moody and D. A. Burleson were added to the board, making it consist of eleven members.

The missionaries reported as follows: Elder T. J. Weaver, preached at Valhermosa Springs, organized one church, seventy-nine additions to churches where he labored, preached fifty-four days in succession in protracted meetings. Elder M. Lyon, employed one-fourth of his time, commencing from April, occupied forty-one days, preached thirty sermons, attended three protracted meetings, assisted in ordaining one minister. Elder J. B. Huckabee, employed three-fourths of his time, commencing January 1, 1889, preached 107 sermons, besides Sabbath School talks, baptized sixteen, organized two Sabbath Schools and two prayer meetings, constituted one church. In giving the reports of missionaries, we have not given all that they generally reported to the association, such as miles traveled, family visits made, etc., because we thought this unnecessary.

The executive board reported that it had sent to Brother Crumpton, secretary of the State Mission board, \$215.95, balance of \$300 unpaid, which the association ordered to be paid to the Home, Foreign and State mission boards.

Brother Huckabee had been employed at a salary of \$250, Brother Lyon at a salary of \$100, and Brother Weaver at a salary of \$100. All these brethren had done good work. The treasurer reported \$863 received for

missions, and \$791.35 paid out, leaving a balance on hand of \$71.65.

The amendment proposed at the last session of the association, making the members of the executive board members of the association during their term of office, was adopted and became a part of the constitution. The committee on documents reported that "the letters of the churches show our association to be in a prosperous condition. Pastors and members have been at work for the Master." The committee on state of religion reported that most of the churches had been greatly revived. The report on Sabbath Schools made by Brother Lyon is so full of truth and sound sense that we wish to preserve it, hence we give it entire.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

Your committee on Sunday Schools report, that probably about one half of the churches of this association maintain Sunday Schools during the pleasant weather of the year, and that about one half of these schools keep up their exercises during the winter months, so far as practicable. A number of the Sunday Schools within our limits are such as are termed "union" schools, using literature denominated non-sectarian. Our Savior said: "He that is not with me, is against me," and applying this divine principle to Sunday School work, it results that such training as is not for Baptist doctrines is against them; and therefore, the work of "union" Sunday School teaching, which ignores every scripture doctrine held by Baptists and not held by others, is against those scripture doctrines, and the churches which hold them, and is indisputably sectarian. This policy of "union" teaching without which such teaching could have no existence indirectly, but specially and effectually, favors the doctrinal views of every sect, except that sect which, in the days of the Apostle Paul, we learn was "everywhere spoken against." Acts 28:22. The obvious failure of the "union" system, as to the sufficient teaching of the truths of the Bible, even in the estimation of those sects that uphold such schools, is plainly intimated by their organizing each its own sectarian Sunday Schools whenever they can be successfully carried on. Your committee would earnestly urge

upon Baptists the advantage and the duty of maintaining their own separate Sunday Schools, and of using their own peculiar Baptist literature. "Train up a child in the way he should go," and he will probably become a Baptist; train up a child not in the way he should go, and he will almost certainly follow some wrong way and be something not a Baptist. Abraham commanded "his children and his household after him," that they keep "the way of the Lord" (Gen. 18:19), and his descendants profited by his example. But an objector may say: We have not enough children of Baptists in our neighborhood for a separate Sunday School. We suggest that if parents and some other grown persons of the family should add themselves to the children, as Moses commanded parents to do daily (Deut. 6:7), the number might be quite sufficient to be interesting, and much good might be mutually imparted and received. We would further suggest that such a regular attendance at the Sunday School might probably result in causing the church itself to meet twice a month or every Sunday, instead of once a month, and this would greatly benefit the Sunday School. If it should be thought a waste of time to meet so often without a preacher, we would venture another suggestion, that no church ever yet really needed and deserved a preacher, and prayed to the Lord with all the heart for one, but that their prayer was answered; and also, that they found that they could support that preacher, even if, like the churches of Macedonia, they made "the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty," to abound "unto the riches of their liberality." (2 Cor. 8:2).

Respectfully submitted,

MAT. LYON, *Chairman.*

The executive board was authorized to divide the money on hand among the different mission boards, Foreign, Home, State and Associational, according to their best judgment. The finance committee reported total amount of cash and vouchers received for missions, \$624.45; education, \$70.60; minute fund, \$39.90; collections on Sabbath, \$19.17; total for all purposes, \$754.12; total membership reported, 3103; baptisms, 142; churches in the union, forty-eight; ordained ministers, thirty-two; value of church property, \$15850; Sunday Schools reported, fourteen; pupils, 411. This we are satisfied is not a fair representation of the Sunday Schools.

It is very difficult to get clerks of churches to report the Sunday Schools in their churches.

The seventy-first session was held with Falkville Church, Morgan county, commencing Friday before the first Sabbath, in October, 1890. Elder W. T. Cobbs preached the introductory sermon. Thirty-eight churches were represented by delegates, and seven by letter, total forty-five. Elder J. Gunn was elected moderator and Jos. Shackelford, clerk. Six new churches were received, viz : Mt. Nebo, Franklin county; 1st Baptist Church, in New Decatur; Cave Spring and Shady Grove, in Morgan county; Furnace Hill, in Sheffield; and New Salem, in Morgan county, from Mt. Carmel Association. The following visiting brethren were present and invited to seats. Elders W. B. Crumpton, corresponding secretary of State Mission Board; B. F. Riley, president of Howard College, at East Lake; P. M. Musgrove and C. B. Wilhite, of Cullman Association; J. A. Chunn, J. R. Nesmith, L. D. Bass, of Liberty Association; and W. B. Carter, of Harris Association. In the reception of Furnace Hill Church, objection was raised to receiving it because it had no delegates present but only a letter. The moderator decided that if there was one vote against receiving it, it could not be received. Elder Mat Lyon appealed from the decision of the moderator. The question was then taken on sustaining the decision of the moderator, and the association voted against sustaining that decision. So the church was received without a delegate. It was not a matter of fellowship at all, but simply of policy, whether the association should receive a church into its membership simply upon its letter without a delegate. It had been done before, in the case of the Sheffield Church. We doubt, however, the propriety of such action. In extreme cases, it may be done.

The board of trustees of the Institute at Moulton, reported, that they had rented the school building to Professor Garrett who had a school of sixty-two pupils. The report on education brought the school matter before the association, in a suggestion to dispose of the school property at Moulton, if a denominational school could not be sustained there. It seemed that Professor Lynch had resigned as principal of the school, and the trustees had not secured a Baptist to take charge of the school, but had rented the building out to a Methodist brother. After some discussion and explanations on the part of the trustees, the following resolution offered by Brother A. L. Moody was adopted :

“Resolved, that this association do not now sell the Baptist Male and Female Institution at Moulton, Alabama, but that the board of trustees thereof be authorized to rent it to any person or persons, whose business is not antagonistic to religion, in the best manner, which will be most remunerative, until further ordered by this association.” This resolution was very unfortunately worded, under it the trustees would have authority to rent it for a cotton factory, or any other manufacturing establishment, except one that is antagonistic to religion. It was not so intended, we know, and we are confident that the board of trustees will not rent it, except for educational purposes, yet the resolution should have been more explicit.

The report on temperance, read by Brother D. A. Burleson, was a strong document, and censured those Christian ministers and members of churches who vote on the side of whiskey. The reports of the missionaries showed a good deal of work done. We give a synopsis of their work: T. J. Weaver preached at Valhermosa Springs and Friendship Churches, salary, \$125. J. B. Huckabee, missionary in the first district, sermons preached, 136;

addresses, twenty-five; baptized, eleven; collected \$29.47 for missions; supplied Mission Grove, Mt. Stanley and some other points; salary, \$300. T. R. Bragg supplied Speak's school house with preaching once a month, reported outlook good, salary, \$50. J. D. McClanahan supplied two appointments, Cave Spring and Poteet's school house; churches organized at both places; salary, about \$50. Elder Speer preached to the church at New Decatur, which church was assisted by the executive board. The treasurer reported \$726.22 as received for missions and minutes; and \$655.40 as paid out. Pledges and collections were taken for missions for the next year, amounting to \$763.05. The amount reported as received for ministerial education was \$68.57, and amount paid out to Brother H. J. Halbrooks, beneficiary, was \$62.80; pledges were taken for ministerial education for the next year amounting to \$128.

Elder Riley, of Howard college, in speaking to the report on education, placed the claims of that institution before the brethren. On Sabbath Judge W. H. Simpson read the report on Sabbath Schools, in a Sabbath School mass meeting at nine a. m. and made a good speech on that subject. He was followed by Elders W. M. Blackwelder, C. W. Hare and Brother Wm. East in some very earnest and instructive remarks. The services at the churches on Sabbath, were largely attended. The old executive and educational boards were reappointed, and Brother T. W. Lynch was reappointed treasurer of the association. H. B. Irwin, T. W. Lynch, N. G. Dilleshaw and Jourdan White were appointed trustees of the Baptist Male and Female Institute whose term will expire in 1893. A resolution was adopted recommending the *Kind Words Series* of Sunday School literature, to the churches and Sabbath Schools.

The committee on the state of religion reported, as follows: "We are grieved to note from the reports from the churches that so few of our churches have enjoyed revivals, but from the small amount of mission money sent to this association and lack of Sunday Schools in our churches, with the meager support given to the pastors, we are not surprised at the results, for our Savior said, "By their fruits ye shall know them," and Paul says, "He that soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly."

The executive board was authorized to divide the mission funds on hand among the different boards—State, Home, Foreign and Associational—according to their best judgment. The report of the finance committee showed that \$524.50 had been paid in for all purposes, in cash, with \$265.62 vouchers. Showing a total of \$781.12 for all purposes. The total amounts reported by the churches, for missions, Sunday Schools, educational purposes, paid out during the year was \$934.82; for pastor's salary, \$3186.16; for repairs, fuel, the poor, etc., \$2579; value of church property, reported, \$25,750.50; total membership, 3338; baptisms, 171; ministers, 36; churches, 53.

We have brought our history down to the present time 1890, and have shown the progress of the association for seventy years. It has made progress, but not as much as it ought to have made—we ought to have 5000 members in our churches, instead of a little over 3000. We ought to do ten times as much for the advancement of Christ's cause as we are doing. The contributions of the members of this association for missions and education and all benevolent purposes, according to the report at the last association amounted to only \$934.82, which is about twenty-eight cents each. We ought to be ashamed of such a small contribution. We ought to average \$1 each,

which would give us over \$3000 to expend for missions and education. We ask every Baptist who reads this book to think seriously of his obligation to his blessed Master who gave His life for him. The Baptists of the Muscles Shoals Association should start out to make the year 1891 memorable for increased devotion and benevolence that when our next association shall convene, we may hear that our churches have all increased their offerings to more than double what they have been. God grant that it may be so.

CONSTITUTION OF THE MUSCLE SHOALS ASSOCIATION.

WE, a part of the Baptist churches in the State of Alabama, having been thrown in the same section of country by the providence of God, are convinced of the necessity of a combination of churches to perpetuate a union among us; and to preserve and maintain a correspondence with each other, propose to maintain and keep the order and rules of an association of churches, according to the following plan:

ARTICLE 1. The association shall be composed of members chosen by the different churches in the union, who, on producing letters from their respective churches certifying their appointment, shall be entitled to seats, and also the members of the executive board shall be entitled to seats and to all the privileges of other members, during their term of office.

ART. 2. The letters from the churches shall give the numbers baptized, received or dismissed by letter, excommunicated, and died during the associational year; also, the total number of communicants in the several churches, and whatever other information that may be of interest or desirable to the association.

ART. 3. The members thus chosen and convened shall be known by the name of the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association, who shall have no power to interfere with the organization or government of the churches, but shall be considered merely an advisory council on questions concerning organization and government. It is, however, agreed that the association shall have power to exclude any church or churches

from the union who shall hold doctrines not set forth in the declaration of faith.

ART. 4. Every church in the union shall be entitled to three delegates. Should any church fail to represent herself, she shall state the cause in her letter to the next association.

ART. 5. A church may be admitted into the union, who shall petition by letter and delegates, if upon examination she is found orthodox and orderly, and the reception shall be manifested by the moderator giving the hand of fellowship.

ART. 6. The association shall elect annually a moderator and clerk from her delegates. The moderator shall preside over her deliberations, preserve order, and see that the rules of order are faithfully observed, decide all questions of order without debate, subject to an appeal to the association by the request of any two members, give the casting vote when the association is equally divided. The clerk shall take correct minutes of the proceedings of the association, and superintend their publication and distribution among the churches.

ART. 7. Any query or queries concerning the union, or state of the churches, that is sent to the association by a church, must be included in her letter. Such queries may be also presented by an individual delegate. In such case, upon motion made and seconded, such query or queries shall be answered as soon as an opportunity will permit.

ART. 8. The association shall adopt that plan for raising an associational fund to defray her expenses which she in her wisdom judges to be most successful and acceptable to the churches generally, which fund shall be deposited in the hands of the treasurer, who shall be accountable to the association for said fund of money, and shall pay it out as she directs.

ART. 9. The association shall adopt the declaration of faith contained in the Baptist Church Manual by Rev. J. Newton Brown, published by the American Baptist Publication Society in Philadelphia, as her declaration of faith.

ART. 10. All questions shall be decided by the vote of a majority, except the case mentioned in another section of this constitution.

ART. 11. The association shall select, annually, one of her ministers to preach the introductory sermon to, and a delegate to write the circular letter for, the next session of the association.

ART. 12. The minutes of the association shall be read, approved and signed by the moderator and clerk before the association rises.

ART. 13. No alteration of this constitution shall be made without an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present at an annual meeting, nor unless the same shall have been proposed at a previous annual meeting.

RULES OF DECORUM.

1. The association shall be opened and closed by prayer.
2. But one person shall speak at a time, and he shall rise and address the moderator, and he shall not proceed until his name is called by that officer. If more than one member shall rise to speak at the same time, the moderator shall determine who shall speak first.
3. No member shall be interrupted while speaking, unless he depart from the subject under discussion, or use words of personal reflection.
4. Every motion, made and seconded, shall come under consideration of the association. A mover may not modify or withdraw his own motion, after discussion, if any member object, without a formal vote; nor may a mover accept an amendment to his proposition, of the discussion, without its being passed by vote, if any member object. A mover shall reduce his proposition to writing at the request of the moderator or any member.
5. When a motion has been regularly announced by the moderator no other motion shall be received, except to amend, to substitute, or to lay upon the table definitely or indefinitely. But a motion for adjournment shall always be in order, except when a member is speaking or the house voting.
6. When a question has been taken up, after allowing time for the debate, the moderator shall put the question to the vote of the association, first in the affirmative, and then in the negative. Those voting in the affirmative shall say "aye," those in the negative, "nay." If the decision be doubtful, the members voting in the affirmative shall first rise and stand to be counted, then those in the negative. The decision thus made shall be immediately announced by the moderator.
7. No member shall absent himself without permission from the moderator.
8. No member shall speak more than twice upon the same subject without the consent of the moderator, unless it be to correct when misunderstood.
9. The moderator shall be allowed to speak as other members, provided he appoint some member to fill the chair while speaking.

10. These rules may be amended at any regular meeting of the association by the vote of two-thirds of the members present.

ARTICLES OF FAITH.

1. *Of the Scriptures.*—We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter; that it reveals principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.

2. *Of the True God.*—We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite and intelligent Spirit, whose name is Jehovah, the maker and supreme ruler of Heaven and earth, inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love. That in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

3. *Of the Fall of Man.*—We believe that man was created in holiness, under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state, in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint but choice—being by nature utterly void of that holiness, required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defence or excuse.

4. *Of the Way of Salvation.*—We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace, through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who, by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin—honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full atonement for our sins, that having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in Heaven, and uniting with His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection, He is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior.

5. *Of Justification.*—We believe that the great Gospel Blessing, which Christ secures to such as believe in him, is justification; that justification includes the pardon of sins and the promise of eternal life, on principles of righteousness, that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in

a Redeemer's blood—by virtue of which faith His perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

6. *Of Freeness of Salvation.*—We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent and obedient faith, and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own determined depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel—which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.

7. *Of Grace in Regeneration.*—We believe that, in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind; that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension, by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel, and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith, the newness of life.

8. *Of Repentance and Faith.*—We believe that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces wrought in our souls by the regenerating spirit of God—whereby, being deeply convicted of our guilt, danger and helplessness, and the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession and supplication for mercy—at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our prophet, priest and king, and relying on Him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior.

9. *Of God's Purpose and Grace.*—We believe that election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which He graciously regenerates, sanctifies and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end, that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of His free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the gospel; that it is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves, it demands and deserves our utmost obedience.

10. *Of Sanctification.*—We believe that sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of His holiness; that it is a progressive work; is begun in regeneration, and is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the sealer and comforter, in the continual use of

the appointed means—especially the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness and prayer.

11. *Of the Perseverance of Saints.*—We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from the superficial professors; that a special providence watches over their welfare, and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

12. *Of the Harmony of the Law and Gospel.*—We believe that the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government; that it is holy, just and good; and that the inability, which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill His precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the gospel, and the means of grace connected with the establishment of the invisible church.

13. *Of a Gospel Church.*—We believe that a visible Church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinance of Christ; governed by His laws, and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His word; and its only scriptural officers are bishops and pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the epistles to Timothy and Titus.

14. *Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.*—We believe that Christian baptism is immersion in water of a believer, in the name of the Father, and Son and Holy Ghost; to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior; with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation, and to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the church, by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ, preceded always by solemn self-examination.

15. *Of the Christian Sabbath.*—We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's day, or Christian Sabbath, and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes by abstaining from all secular labor and sinful recreations by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both public and private, and by preparation for that "rest that remaineth for the people of God."

16. *Of Civil Government.*—We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society; and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed, except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus

Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience and the prince of the kings of the earth.

17. *Of the Righteous and the Wicked.*—We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem, while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse, and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

18. *Of the World to Come.*—We believe that the end of this world is approaching; that at the last day Christ will descend from Heaven and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution; that a solemn separation will then take place, that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in Heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.

History of the Churches.

THERE have been about 160 churches connected with the Muscle Shoals Association since its organization in 1820. Many of these have been dismissed to join other associations and form associations. The Warrior River, Big Bear Creek, Mt. Carmel and Florence Associations, have been formed principally from churches connected with this body. A number have been dissolved. The association now has fifty-three churches in it. Its territory is large, extending from Marshall county on the east to Colbert and Franklin on the west, and from the Tennessee river on the north to the Sand Mountains on the south. It has some growing towns and cities, Tusculumbia, Decatur, Sheffield and Russellville. If the ministers and churches will do their duty in the next decade, our strength will be more than doubled.

In giving the history of the churches, we have had some trouble in getting the facts. Church books have been lost, and some clerks have paid no attention to our requests for information. We have done the best we could, under the circumstances. We have given the history of some of the old churches that have dissolved, because their history was interesting as being among the first churches planted in this part of north Alabama.

RUSSELL VALLEY CHURCH.

This church was organized under the name of Bear Creek Church, in June, 1817, on thirty-two members,

Elders Peter Woods and William Jennings being the presbytery. The following were the constituent members: John Davis, Polly Davis, James Robertson, Anna Robertson, William Russell, Sr., Ebenezer Bowlin, Abigail Bowlin, William Gotcher, Polly Gotcher, Jesse Bean, Polly Bean, Anna Stanphill, Louis Russell, Hester Russell, Lemuel Bean, Sally Bean, William Russell, Jr., Lucy Arnold, Agnes Russell, Temple Sargent, Peggy Sargent, William Sargent, Polly Sargent, Jabez Gerald, Wm. Bailey, Elizabeth F. Gerald, Edwin Farned, Budes Arnold, Mary Farned, Isham Arnold, Jeremiah Horner, Black Sarah.

Elder John Davis was the first pastor. Joshua Gotcher, Ebenezer Bowlin and Temple Sargent were ordained deacons on the first Sabbath, in October, 1817. The church connected itself with Flint River Association, and elected delegates to the same, in August, 1817. Lemuel Bean seems to have been the clerk for a while, and after him, Wm. Lucas. When the name of the church was changed, the minute book does not show, but we presume it was in the year 1820. The minutes show that land had been secured in 1819, for a church site. This was a few miles east or southeast of Russellville, where the church was permanently located. The association was organized at this church, then called Russell Valley Church, on the 15th of July, 1820. Theophilous Skinner and wife joined this church in February, 1818, and he was ordained to the ministry at the July meeting, in 1818, Elders John Davis and Abner Smith being the presbytery. There was one practice which this church had in those early days, which it would be well for our churches now to imitate. The church was informed that there were persons in the neighborhood who were Baptists and held their church letters in their pockets. A

committee was appointed to see those parties and learn from them why they did not put their letters into the church. Elder Abner Smith and Jeremiah Ward were members of this church. The subject of feet-washing agitated the church to some extent. In 1820, this declaration was made by the church: "They believe it to be a duty for the brethren to wash one another's feet, but not an ordinance to follow the Lord's Supper as some have supposed."

There were at Spring Creek, in the Tennessee Valley, a number of Baptists, some of whom had joined Russell Valley Church, Brother Amos Jarmon one of them, these brethren asked the Russell Valley Church to extend an arm in that neighborhood. This was done, and a committee of ten or more were appointed to go to Spring Creek and receive members. Jeremiah Ward was their supply. This arm afterwards became Spring Creek Church.

In 1822, Brother Thos. S. Pope was excluded from the church because he had joined the masons. He was restored to the fellowship of the church, so the record states, in July, 1829, by recantation. Whether he quit the masons or not is not stated. He afterwards acted as deacon of the church.

In 1822, we find the names of James Allen and John Cook as deacons of the church in addition to the others already mentioned. Brothers Sargent and Cook remained deacons, we suppose, as long as they lived. In 1841, the name of Brother William Moss appears as a deacon, and he continued in office until the church was dissolved.

Elder John Davis resigned as pastor in 1827. He was succeeded by Elder John L. Townes, who served the church for a short time, but it seems that it had no regu-

lar pastor for several years. Elders Burns, Barker, and ministers of their own membership, Elders Thos. Moss and Skinner preached for the church from time to time. Elder Townes accepted the pastoral care of the church, April, 1830, and continued until the close of the year. The church seems to have been without a regular pastor for several years. It held regular conference meetings, however, and had preaching from different brethren, Brothers Moss and Skinner principally. Elder Skinner became the pastor and served for many years; and after him Elder Thos. Moss.

Brother Lucas was clerk until 1832, when Wm. Moss became clerk and served until 1841. Then Wm. J. Bullock was made clerk and served until the church was dissolved. The last record we have been able to find of a meeting of the church is dated in August, 1846. If it met after that, we have no account of it. In 1822, the number of members on the roll was ninety-four. In 1823, the number reported to the association was seventy-three. The number continued to decrease until in 1846, when the separation between the missionary and anti-missionary parties occurred—there were only fifteen white members. We suppose these members went with the anti-missionary party, or that the church dissolved. This was the mother of churches in the association, most of the churches that constituted the association went out from her.

RUSSELL VALLEY CHURCH, NO. 2.

In 1858, the old Russell Valley Church was reorganized through the influence of Elder John C. Roberts, and was represented in the association that year. It reported thirteen members. Elder Roberts was its pastor in 1868 and 1869, and Elder W. R. Alexander in 1860, 1861 and 1862.

Its total membership in 1862 was sixty-six. The association held its forty-second annual session with this church in 1861. It continued to exist until about 1867 or 1868. Most of the members joined Russellville Church, which was organized in July, 1867. We have no records of the church later than 1867.

RUSSELLVILLE CHURCH.

In 1833, a church was organized in Russellville, then the county town of Franklin county, and represented itself in the association, but it did not exist very long. In 1850, we see from the minutes that the Russellville Church was received into the association as a new church, and its name appears on the minutes up to 1857. But not often represented. We think there was no church in existence in 1857, when Russell Valley Church was reorganized. In July the 13th, 1867, a church was organized with the following members: Wm. H. Freeman, Cynthia C. Kirk, R. Oliver, G. W. Hurley, Henry Hargett, Edy Vincent, Jasper Oliver, Lucy A. Hurley, Susan Nance, R. J. Jennings, M. J. Jennings. Elders Mike Finney and R. J. Jennings constituted the presbytery. Elder R. J. Jennings was elected pastor and Brother G. W. Hurley, clerk. Brother Hurley continued as clerk until May, 1870, when Brother Peter Clay was elected, and served until a few years ago, when the present clerk, Brother N. C. Greenhill was elected. Brother S. M. Scott was elected deacon, July, 1871, and was ordained in August following. Elder Jennings served the church as pastor until 1871. Elder J. C. Roberts succeeded him and entered upon his work in December, 1871, and served one year. Elder Jas. S. Gibson was called at the September meeting, 1872, and entered upon his work as pastor in December, 1872, and served one year. Elder J. C. Roberts

was again called as pastor, in September, 1873, and we presume served that year. It is stated in the church book that Elder J. C. Vincent was called as pastor, in May, 1874, for the remainder of the associational year. He was also elected pastor in September, 1874, for the next associational year. At the January meeting, 1875, Elder Jas. S. Gibson was elected as pastor to serve until January, 1876. Afterwards Elder R. T. Wear was associated with him as pastor and the two served the church, until 1878, when Elder Wear became the pastor and continued until 1889. Since that time the church has had no regular pastor, until recently, 1890. Elder Weaver is now pastor. Russellville has grown considerably in population within the last three years. The iron ore beds adjacent to the place are being worked. It now has a railroad connecting it with Sheffield and Birmingham. It is a growing town. The Baptists have built them a new and handsome house of worship. The outlook for the church is encouraging. It has always been very liberal in its contributions to mission and ministerial education, and has a membership of men and women that have the ability to do much for the Master's cause. Its membership as reported to the association in 1890, was 144. It has kept up a Sabbath School for a number of years through the indefatigable labors of Brethren Harvey Sargent, Wm. East, Peter Clay and Sister East and others. We remember hearing Brother Sargent say that during one year, he never was absent a single Sabbath from the School, though he lived five or six miles from Russellville and had terrible bad roads to travel over. He was the superintendent. If all superintendents and teachers would act in this way, our churches would have more successful schools.

TOWN CREEK CHURCH.

This church was one of the constituent members of the association, and was organized in May, 1818. Elders John Davis and Theophilous Skinner being the presbytery. It is located in Lawrence county, eight miles west of Moulton, on the public road leading from Moulton to Russellville. It is in the midst of a rich and populous neighborhood. We have not been able to secure the records of this church, and cannot give the names of its constituent members and its first deacons. Its first pastor was Abner Smith, who was member of Russell Valley Church. How long he served we are not able to say. In 1827, D. Coopwood and Wm. Coopwood and Thos. Elkins were messengers to the association. It had a membership then of thirty-six. It is not stated who was the pastor at that time. In 1833, the fourteenth session of the association was held with this church.

In 1840, A. L. Stovall, George D. Cleere and Jephth West were appointed delegates to the association. Brother Stovall was elected clerk of the association at this meeting and continued clerk for many years. He was not at this time a minister. He became one soon after, however, as we see by the minutes that, in 1842, he was put down as an ordained minister. He was pastor of this church for a number of years—up to 1852, when he removed to Mississippi. Elder G. D. Russell succeeded him and served one year. Elder J. C. Roberts succeeded him, and served until 1856, when Elder W. H. Barksdale became pastor. Elder J. C. Roberts was its pastor in 1858 and 1859. Elder Thos. Nicholson was pastor from 1860 to 1862. In 1863 and 1864, part of the time, Elder Jos. Shackelford was pastor. After this, Elder J. C. Roberts was pastor for several years. He was succeeded by Elder

J. Gunn, who was pastor for one year. Then Elder Roberts again became pastor. He was followed by Elders J. S. Gibson and R. T. Wear. Elder S. R. C. Adams was the pastor one year, 1886. Elder R. T. Wear succeeded him, and is the present pastor. The names of all the deacons of the church we have not been able to procure. We mention a few: Brothers Jonathan Sandlin, Jeptha West, T. Jones, J. H. Caruth, W. S. Johnson, L. A. Stephens, L. M. Wear.

This church has sent out quite a number of ministers, we mention the following: A. L. Stovall, J. C. Roberts, R. T. Wear, Wm. Stockton, J. I. Stockton, J. M. Roberts, L. R. Craig. It has also been the mother of several churches. Mt. Hope and New Prospect Churches were formed from members of this church. At one time, it was the largest church in the association, having over 300 members. Its membership now is 207. Elder R. T. Wear is its faithful pastor. Under his administration, the church has grown in spiritual strength, if not in members. It has a large and commodious house of worship. Brother J. N. Jackson is the clerk.

CARMEL CHURCH.

This church was one of the constituent members of the association. It was organized on the second Saturday in August, 1819, Elders John Davis, Skinner and Ward being the presbytery. Elder Davis was its supply. This church was situated on Town Creek, in Lawrence county, at the bridge leading from Courtland to Tusculum. Elders J. L. Townes, Henry W. Hodges and Wm. Leigh were at one time members of this church. It was a thorough going missionary body. It was reported to the association in 1850 as dissolved. We are sorry that we are not able to give more information about it. The

other churches that formed the association, Hepzibah, in Franklin county, Mill Creek, Little Cypress Creek and Butler's Creek, in Lauderdale county, have all passed away, and we can give no account of them.

SPRING HILL CHURCH.

What year this church was constituted we have not been able to find out, but it must have been previous to the constitution of the association, as it had joined Flint River Association, and came from that body to the Muscle Shoals Association at its second session, in 1821. Elders Joseph Lane, Theophilous Norwood, Wm. Lucas were members of this church. W. J. Thompson was the pastor in 1853.

We have no church record and therefore can give but little information concerning it. The church was located about four miles west of Decatur, near the Memphis and Charlestown railroad. The place is now occupied by a colored Baptist Church called by the same name. The house has been destroyed. In old times it was a place for large congregations. It was dissolved, we suppose, about 1860 or 1861, or perhaps the white members all died or lettered out and left the church to the colored members, as we find in the minutes of 1859 that there were only seven white members and forty colored. Elder W. J. Thompson was its pastor. There was no representation after this.

SALEM CHURCH, LAWRENCE COUNTY.

This church is located about three miles northwest of Moulton. It joined the association at its second session, in 1821. It was organized, we suppose, about that time. In 1826 and 1827, one James Seward seems to have given this church some trouble. The matter was brought to

the association, and it declared by resolution, "that we view James Seward as a disturber of churches, and therefore we advise them to have nothing to do with him." He was excluded from the church, we think. We have not been able to get the church book of this church, and can, therefore, give but little information concerning it, except that which we glean from the minutes.

In 1827, it had thirty-one members. In 1840, it had 106. Elder John Leigh was a member here. Who were its pastors or deacons up to 1853, we cannot tell. In 1853, T. S. Carson was pastor; in 1855-6, J. C. Roberts; in 1857, Jos. Shackelford; in 1860, J. T. Craig. Since that time, the following ministers have served the church: J. C. Roberts, J. R. Nesmith, J. S. Gibson, R. T. Wear, J. L. Lattimore, J. M. Roberts and L. M. Wear. Elder R. W. Norwood was ordained in this church. At one time this church was considered one of the strong churches of the association, but it has declined very much. They have a good comfortable house of worship. Sometimes they have a Sabbath School, but this is seldom. It is one among the oldest churches in the association, and we would like to see it prosper.

MT. PLEASANT CHURCH.

This church was originally called Pond Creek, and joined the association in 1822. In 1821, Brother Amos Jarman, who was a member of the Russell Valley Church, induced that church to extend an arm in the neighborhood in which he lived on Spring Creek. The Russell Valley Church sent a number of its members down there who held a conference and received members. During the next year this arm became a church, and represented itself in the association. After this we suppose that Pond Creek Church was formed from members of this

Spring Creek Church, at least Amos Jarman was one of the constituent members of Pond Creek Church, whose name was changed to Mt. Pleasant, and was represented in the association in 1827, by Brothers J. Burns, Amos Jarman and Asa Cobb, and the church reported thirty-one members. In 1840, it had 107 members. Elders John L. Townes and Wm. Leigh were members of this church. We suppose that Elder Jeremiah Burns was pastor of the church as long as he remained in Alabama, until 1831. Elder Townes was also its pastor for many years. Our first acquaintance with the church was in 1856. Elder W. H. Barksdale was its pastor then and remained so until he left the State, in 1858. He became its pastor about 1852. Elder Jos. Shackelford became pastor of the church in 1859, and continued until 1868, with the exception of one year during the war. Elder W. W. Kone succeeded him in 1869 and was pastor until 1870. In 1871, Elder F. L. Seward became pastor and served one year. In 1872, Elder R. Jennings was the pastor and served two years. In 1874, Elder Jos. Shackelford again became the pastor and served until 1876. Elder J. Gunn succeeded him and was pastor until 1884. In 1885, Elder John Speer became pastor of the church and served until 1888. Elder W. B. Carter preached for the church a little while. Elder J. B. Huckabee was pastor for a short time in 1890, but did not serve a year.

We do not know that the church has any pastor now. The names of its deacons we have not been able to find. We give a few whom we know: Amos Jarman, John Alexander, Hall Jarman, Edward Stanley, A. H. Stanley.

This church is located five miles north of Leighton. It was once a strong and active church, in the midst of a wealthy community. Since the war it has gone down, many of the old members have died or moved away. A

new generation has grown up and things are very different from what they were thirty years ago, when the writer was pastor. There is a fine field for work, however, in this community, and much good can be done by a live, energetic pastor. The membership was only thirty-seven in 1889. There have been some few additions since then.

SALEM CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY.

The church was located some twelve or fifteen miles east of Somerville, the county seat of Morgan county. It was organized July 30, 1822, with fifty-three members from Shilo Church. The presbytery consisted of Elders William Byrd, John Nicholson and James Welch. It adopted the articles of faith of the Flint River Association and joined the Muscle Shoals Association in 1823. The pastors, before 1840, we cannot give, those after that date in their order were Enoch Windes, J. K. Lynn, M. A. Verser and J. C. Shelton. The deacons were W. G. Dossey, Elijah B. Nunn, John Lemons, H. L. Briscoe, James S. Raines, G. W. Tipton, B. Bowlin, John N. Briscoe, Green Hyatt. The last two are deacons of New Salem Church. The clerks have been as follows: Mark Dossey, who was elected at the organization, John Summers. No record of the church can be found until August, 1857. Hence we cannot give the names of all the clerks.

The church, however, kept up regular worship. We find that T. Briscoe, and E. Thompson were delegates to the association in 1827, and were put down as ordained ministers. It is probable that one or both of these brethren were pastors at some time before 1839. About that year or perhaps before that, Enoch Windes moved into the community, and was ordained in this church, and

was put down as an ordained minister in 1840. In 1873, December 30th, Salem church was dissolved. On the 21st of December, 1873, New Salem Church was organized with a membership of nineteen. During "the war, between the States," the old church had no regular preaching, and it gradually went down. There was lack of unity and a great deal of disorder and contention had sprung up. Discipline could not be enforced. It was thought best that the old organization be dissolved, and that a new church take its place. In this way many who were mere nominal members could be gotten rid of. And the new church could have better hope of success. Elders M. A. Verser, J. S. Rains and B. Bowlin, constituted the presbytery who organized the new church. New Salem Church has prospered. It was moved to another location, several miles from the old site. Enoch Windes, E. F. Windes and R. A. Windes were sent out as ministers by Salem Church. The last two sons of the first named. Brother D. T. Briscoe was elected clerk of New Salem at its organization, and is still its clerk. Elder M. A. Verser was chosen its pastor and served until November, 1874, when he resigned to become missionary of the association. Elder C. W. McClelland followed him. In 1876, Elder Verser was elected again and served until his death. Elder J. E. Weaver, its present pastor succeeded him. New Salem was a member of the Muscle Shoals Association until 1878, when it was dismissed to join Mt. Carmel Association. It connected itself again with the Muscle Shoals Association in 1890. Its membership as reported to the association is eighty. New Salem is a growing church, and stands firm in the faith.

MT. PISGAH CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY.

This church was organized May 8, 1824, as Cedar Springs Baptist Church. The presbytery consisted of Elders James Edens, Wm. Byrd and Stephen Penn. The only names given as being in the organization are those of Brethren John Russell, Nicodemus Hackworth, James Edens and Featherstone Walden. We suppose there were others. James Edens was made the first deacon and F. Walden, clerk. Elder Byrd was called as pastor and remained as such about a year. In September, 1824, it joined Muscle Shoals Association. Brethren Hackworth, Edens and Walden were the delegates; all three of these brethren afterwards became ministers of the gospel. Elder Walden became the pastor of the church and continued until his death in 1827. James Edens succeeded Walden as clerk, and served until November, 1828. The following are the names of the clerks in their order: James Douthit, James R. Lowery, J. G. Calloway, Richard B. Allison, Wm. J. Thompson, Henry Calloway, Claiborn Ratliff, Hickerson Reeves, G. H. Hughes and H. A. McClellan, who is the present clerk. The deacons, after Brother James Edens, were as follows: James Douthit, Jonathan Burleson, Samuel Jeffries, Richard B. Allison, Aaron Wood, Brother Kirkland, Edward Wise, James Herring, D. M. Crow, D. H. McClellan and John W. Gibson. In May, 1825, there were twenty-one members, and in 1828, only thirty-three. The church seems to have grown very slowly. Elder Hackworth who was ordained in 1826, succeeded Elder Walden as pastor. James Edens was ordained at Spring Hill Church on the fourth Sunday, in November, 1828, Elder Jeremiah Burns, Henry W. Hodges, and John L. Townes being the presbytery. Elder Jos. Lane was ordained at the same time,

by the same presbytery. Elder Edens succeeded Elder Hackworth in 1828, and was pastor until 1835. During this time, however, several ministers preached at the church, but whether as pastors or not, the record does not say.

About this time, it appears that the church had a great deal of trouble with drinking members, almost every church conference had to deal with someone who had been drinking. The subject of building a new meeting house was brought up in 1829. It seems that the church up to this time had no house of worship, the meetings were held at private houses or at a school house. One place is mentioned, "Bluff Spring." At the January meeting, 1830, it was determined to build, and at a place called "Crow's Spring" where it has been until 1890, when the church decided to build a new house of worship about one-half mile west of the village of Flint. They have erected a large and commodious house, which is not quite finished at this writing. The first meeting held in the new church house was on Friday before the first Sunday in July, 1830. It was made a day of fasting and prayer. The name of the church was then changed to Mt. Pisgah. We notice from the minutes that the church in those days observed "feet-washing." The number of members in August, 1830, was sixty-nine.

In 1831, it seems that the missionary question which had been agitating the association was troubling this church. A Brother Lowery moved in conference, "to take into consideration the proceedings of the Muscle Shoals Missionary Society, and decide whether the members of that society were in order, for the reason that the church professed to be burthened by it." The church decided that the members of that society were out of

order. A Brother Frazier refused to submit to the action of the church, and pronounced the church a tyrant, and urged it to decide on his standing. He was excluded. At the next meeting the church reconsidered its previous action, and decided that "joining a missionary society shall not be a matter of dealing with any brother." Brother Frazier was restored on making an acknowledgment to the church for his language.

In 1834, the church refused to hear a letter read from the Alabama Baptist State convention—why is not stated. Some difficulty arose between Brother Edens and some of the members, and the church called a Brother Furgison to serve them, but it is not stated whether he accepted. There seems to have been no regular pastor until January, 1838, when the church called Elder John Leigh who remained with them until 1841. In April, 1839, the church was very much revived and had a very large ingathering. Thirty-four was baptized. Among the number were Rufus C. and Richard B. Burleson, and Joseph C. Vincent, all three of whom became ministers of the gospel. Dr. R. C. Burleson is now president of Baylor University, Waco, Texas, and has been for many years; his brother, R. B. was at one time principal of the Female Institute, at Moulton, afterwards, he was a professor in Waco University, of which his brother was president. Elder Vincent was for several years a missionary for our association. He is now living in Lawrence county, Alabama.

Samuel Wood and Jonas Wood were called to ordination by this church, in March, 1841. Elder John M. Cummings succeeded Elder Leigh as pastor, and continued until 1845. In 1842, the church numbered 232. Joseph D. Hopper, a member of this church, was ordained a minister in August, 1845. Elder Wm. Irwin was pastor in 1846-7. In January, 1848, Elder Wm. Lucas was

called, and continued as pastor until 1853. In 1850, the number of members was 171. In 1852, a Sabbath School was organized. In the fall of 1853, Elder Lucas resigned and moved to Texas. He was succeeded in 1854 by Elder J. Gunn who served the church twenty years. In 1875, he resigned on account of his health, and was succeeded by Elder Charles W. Callahan, who served one year. Elder Gunn became pastor again in 1876 and served until 1878. During the long pastorate of Brother Gunn the church enjoyed many refreshing seasons, and its numbers were largely increased. During the war services were very irregular. There was preaching on the Sabbath most of the time, but very few conference meetings. Elders W. B. Carter and Wm. Duncan were ordained in August, 1873. Elder W. B. Carter succeeded Elder Gunn as pastor, in 1879, and served ten years. In November, 1888, Elder John Speer was called as pastor and served until the fall of 1890. We believe the church has no pastor now.

In 1886, a great calamity befell this church. A division arose among its members, concerning its pastor. This division culminated in the exclusion of about twenty or twenty-two of its members who would not fellowship the pastor, Brother W. B. Carter, on account of some rumors concerning him, although the church had completely exonerated him. These excluded members organized themselves into what they called Antioch Church. This trouble greatly hurt the church. We trust that it will recover from the injury done, and will greatly prosper in its new home. In April, 1889, a ministers' jubilee meeting was held at this church. Dr. R. C. Burleson, of Texas, preached a jubilee sermon in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of his baptism into the fellowship of the church. It was a good meeting.

MT. NEBO CHURCH, FRANKLIN COUNTY.

This church was received into the association in July, 1825. The Russell Valley Church had extended an arm of the church in the neighborhood of Brother Suggs, which was east of Russellville. In March, 1824, the members composing the arm requested letters from the Russell Valley Church in order that they might constitute themselves into a church. This was granted, and the church was constituted on Saturday before the second Lord's day, in April, 1824, with the following members: Francis Gholson and wife, Moses Speer and wife, Thomas Suggs and wife, James Smith and wife, Joshua Gotcher and wife, John Hendly and wife, Edwin Farned and wife, Sister Gillespi, Sister Wilson, Wm. Suggs, and Zackeriah Winn. These were the constituent members. As Brother Gotcher was a deacon in the Russell Valley Church, we suppose he held the same position in the new church. We have not been able to find out who constituted the presbytery. Brother Francis Gholson was the clerk of the arm, and we suppose remained clerk of the church. Elder Skinner removed his membership to this church, as he was a delegate to the association from it in 1827. We presume also that he was a pastor of it for several years. It had forty-two members in 1827. In 1840 it had 202. We are unable to say who were the pastors up to 1853. In that year and up to 1856, Elder R. J. Jennings was pastor, and its members had decreased to forty-five. In 1857 and 1858, Elder M. Finney was pastor. We have no account of it in the minutes of the association after 1858. We think the church went down.

In 1890, the church was reconstituted and represented itself in the association. Elder R. T. Wear is its pastor and Wm. East its delegate.

ENON CHURCH.

This church is situated in Lawrence county, ten miles east of Moulton. It was originally called Birdwell's Spring Church. It was one of the constituent members of the association. It was organized in July, 1819, on nine members, whose names are as follows: Stephen Penn, Mary Penn, John Birdwell, Mary Birdwell, Ezekiel Thomas, Jenny Thomas, George Keys, Elizabeth Keys and Sarah Simpson. Stephen Penn, who had been previously licensed to preach, was called to ordination and to the pastorate of the church in July, 1819, and served the church until 1833, assisted by Joseph Lane, James Edens and Bennet Wood. In 1833, Elder Sylvanus Gibson was called to the pastorate and served until his death, which occurred July 25, 1851. During his pastorate he baptized 196 members and received by letter into the church sixty-six, making a total in eighteen years of 262 members. Elder George D. Russell succeeded Elder Gibson and served two years as pastor. He was followed by Elder W. W. Wilhite, who served from 1854 to 1862, eight years. Elder J. Gunn was pastor from 1863 to 1866. In 1866, Elder Wilhite was again chosen pastor and continued until 1870. Elder John L. Lattimore followed him and served until 1875. He was succeeded by Elder Jas. S. Gibson who served one year, then he and Elder R. T. Wear served the church jointly in 1876 and 1877, and Elder Wear in 1878. Elder J. R. Nesmith was pastor in 1879 and 1880. He was succeeded by Elder Mat Lyon, who served in 1881-2. Elder S. R. C. Adams was called in 1883 and served the church four years until 1887. He was succeeded by Elder W. T. Cobbs in 1887, who is the present pastor. The following brethren have been deacons: John Birdwell and E. Thomas were

the first deacons, followed by James Jackson, Griggs Putnam, Milton McClanahan, Isham Milam, John Keys, Charles Gibson, P. A. McDaniel, P. C. Branon, J. W. Keys, James Sullivan, J. T. Wallace and Joseph Laton.

The clerks were the following in the order named: E. Thomas, S. W. Wallace, Milton McClanahan, John Kitchens, W. D. McDaniel, G. E. Keys, John M. Kitchens and R. L. Keys.

This church has had many refreshing seasons and has prospered. In the last four years it has lost many of its members by lettering them off to join new churches organized in adjacent neighborhoods. Its membership in 1890 was 158.

BETHEL CHURCH, IN LAWRENCE COUNTY.

This church was one of the constituent members of the association. It was organized on the 26th day of June, 1819. The presbytery consisted of Elders John Davis, Solomon Smith and Theophilous Skinner. The following were the constituent members: A. Potts, Wm. Skinner, Judy Skinner, Hester McAfee, Sam'l Bruton, Harvey Skinner, Sarah McNatt and Molly Bruton. Elder T. Skinner was the first pastor, and served until 1821. Then Elder Abner Smith served one year. In 1823, Elder Josiah Barker became pastor and served until 1829. In 1830, Elder George Russell was chosen pastor, and served one year. Elder Abner Smith followed him and served until 1834. Elder Josiah Barker was then called and served until 1841. Elder John L. Townes followed him and served until 1846, when he resigned. Elder T. S. Carson was then called and served until 1854. Elder Mike Finney succeeded him and served until 1859. He was followed by Elder John Sherrell, who was pastor

from 1859 to 1865. In 1866, Elder Isaac Bradford was pastor. In 1867 Elder George Little. In 1868, Elder John Sherrell. After him, Elder R. J. Jennings became pastor and served until 1870. In 1871, Elder John R. Nesmith was called to be pastor and served four years in succession and resigned. Elder Mike Finney succeeded him and served two years. Elder Nesmith was called again and served one year. He was succeeded by Elder W. C. Summers, who is the present pastor (1890). It has had fourteen different pastors in the seventy-one years of its existence. About the year 1838 the church began holding annual protracted meetings with wonderful success. People from fifteen to twenty miles around attended those meetings, and vast crowds are present almost every year at the August meeting of the Bethel church.

The church is in the midst of a populous neighborhood, eight miles south from Leighton, and on the county line road, and has always been noted for the large congregations that attend there. Its membership for a number of years has exceeded 200. In 1890, the membership reported was 173. About the year 1848 the church became divided on the missionary question, which is not very well settled yet. This church has never had a regular system about paying its pastor. It has, therefore, had but little pastoral work done ; for a preacher cannot plow for his bread and make many pastoral visits, neither can he give the time to the preparation of his sermons, that he ought, in order that he may teach and instruct his people. The following are the names of the brethren who have been deacons, as we glean from the church book, in regular order : Wm. Skinner, John Potts, John Landers, Jacob Landers, John Carson, Thomas Masterson, Sr., W. C. Kirby, Rigdon Beaver, Wm. A. Nesmith, Wm.

Sherrell, —Doss, A. B. Landers, G. W. Smith, M. H. Golden, W. W. Nesmith.

The clerks have been : E. H. McNatt, who was a good and faithful officer, as appears from the church book, T. Hurley, G. P. Duncan, Isaac Scott, Sam'l W. Wallace, Robert Kent, Mike Finney, T. H. Nesmith, H. Haskey, D. C. Kent, J. M. Kirby, A. J. Kirby, John A. Bradford, C. C. Smith and J. M. Briley.

There never were but two negro members of this church, both were gone before the war. About the year 1845, Bethel church had a library of about thirty volumes. The whole is lost. Elder J. R. Nesmith kept up a Sabbath School one year; he also kept up a regular prayer meeting for about the same time. This was while he was pastor. In such a populous neighborhood it is strange that a Sabbath School and a weekly prayer meeting have not been kept up all the time at this church. About three years ago, a minister of the Free Methodist Church, came into the neighborhood and began to preach the doctrine of sanctification as held by that denomination, and also against water baptism. He was a fluent speaker and attracted great attention. The church permitted him to preach in their house of worship, and hold a meeting there. The result was that some disturbance was created in the church, and the church was injured. Some of its members seemed inclined to receive the doctrines of this itinerant preacher, and some were carried off. But we are glad to know that the church has recovered from the injury done, and is, perhaps, stronger in the faith than before. It has a band of faithful women who have kept up a prayer meeting for some months, and who appear to be the life of the church. The female members of this church are largely in the majority. This church occupies a fine field and can become a mighty

power for good if it will. It ought to have preaching more than once a month. It ought to have a good, strong Sabbath School.

HOPEWELL CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY.

This church was received into the association in July, 1825. It was constituted on the first Saturday in December, 1824. The presbytery was Elders Featherstone, Walden, Stephen Penn and John Birdwell. The following were the constituent members: Barkley Ballard, Polly Ballard, Wm. Johnson, Sarah McDowell, Martha Rodgers, James Simmons, Stacy Simmons, Elizabeth Simmons, Polly Simmons, Solomon Simmons, Nicholas Gillentine, Sr., Mary Simmons, Jane Gillentine, Richard L. Gillentine, Nicholas Gillentine, Jr., Martha Gillentine, Annie Gillentine, Gideon Spalden and Nancy Spalden. Bro. Nicholas Gillentine was chosen deacon and William Johnson, clerk. The site chosen for the church was on Wm. Johnson's land, near the well of Bro. Simmons. We suppose it is the place where the church house now stands, about two and one-half miles east of Danville. The minutes do not show who was the pastor in 1825 or 1826. Bethel church was petitioned in November, 1826, for Elder Barker to attend the church as a minister but did not succeed in getting him. It then petitioned Carmel Church to send them a minister. It appears that this request was granted, and we find that Elder Henry W. Hodges preached for this church for a while, then Elder Barker seems to have been its supply in 1828. In 1829 Elder Joseph Lane became pastor and preached for the church for about one year, after which time Elder James Edens preached to the church for several years. It appears from the record that he was a member as he applied for a letter in November, 1833, which was granted. At

the March meeting, 1834, Elder Sylvanus Gibson was chosen pastor and served the church seventeen years, until his death in 1851. In 1853, we find that Elder Wm. Lucas was pastor, and we suppose in 1852 also. Elder W. W. Wilhite succeeded him and was pastor until 1859, when Elder J. Gunn became pastor and continued until 1862. Elder W. W. Wilhite succeeded him and was pastor until 1870. Elder Gunn became pastor again in 1870 and continued until 1873, when Elder J. S. Gibson became pastor and served several years. In 1879, Elder E. D. Stephenson was pastor. In 1880 it had no pastor. In 1881, Elder T. H. Stamps became pastor and remained two years. In 1883, Elder Mat Lyon became pastor and served one year. In 1884, Elder John D. McClanahan became pastor and has continued until the present time. On Saturday before first Lord's day, in July, 1828, Brothers Wm. Johnson and James Ferguson were ordained as deacons of the church by Elders Barker and Abner Smith. The other deacons of the church, so far as we can gather from the minutes, were Jos. Herring, ordained in April, 1837; James Wise and James W. Gibson, ordained in April, 1841. Brother Jos. Herring succeeded Brother Wm. Johnson as clerk of this church, and Brother L. M. Reaves assistant clerk in 1845. Since that time we know of only one brother who has been clerk, Brother D. J. Orr, who is the present clerk. Brother Herring we suppose served until along in 1856 or 1857 or until his death. We cannot give the names of the other deacons. Hopewell has sent out several ministers, Brother James Ferguson, ordained in 1837 and died in 1839, is one that the minutes mention; A. W. Nunn another. In 1844, it is recorded in the minutes that the church was to meet on Saturday night of their meeting in June and wash one another's feet, but we have no account of its being done. We suppose it

was, however. Hopewell church was once a very strong and liberal church, It stood up for missionary effort. It has been weakened some by lettering out members who formed other churches. In 1853, it had 108 members; 1861, 168 members; in 1870, 120; in 1880, 59; in 1890, 129.

In early days, we learn from the church book, that it was very strict in its discipline. It dealt rigidly with those who violated its rules—drunkenness, adultery, perjury, leaving the county without paying debts, and scandal mongers, fighting and non-attendance upon the meetings were severely dealt with, and quite a number were excluded from time to time. Provisions were made for traveling preachers who might visit them.

COURTLAND CHURCH.

This church was organized May 5, 1827. The presbytery consisted of Elders Henry W. Hodges, Daniel P. Bestor, and John L. Townes. The following were the constituent members: Abner Blocker, Thomas Ashford, William Ashford, David Palmore, Joseph A. Doyle, Sinai Downing, Elizabeth Sims, Elizabeth S. Dandridge, Penelope McGregor, Jane Ashford, Judith Ashford, Fanny Goode, Charity Bird, Lucinda McLemore, Primus, a colored man, and Anna, a colored woman. Elder Daniel P. Bestor was the first pastor, Thomas Ashford was the first deacon, and Abner Blocker was the first clerk. The following were the pastors in regular order after Bestor, who served six years: Joseph Lane, 1834-5; J. L. Townes, 1836-1844, eight years; A. L. Stovall, 1845-1850, five years; D. Bridenthall, 1851-4, four years; W. H. Barksdale, 1855-7, two years; Jos. Shackelford, 1858-65, seven years, also in 1869; G. A. Coulson, 1866-7, two years; W. W. Kone, 1870; R. J. Jennings in 1872. After Brother

Jennings there was no regular preaching. The membership decreased until there were only two members: Sisters Martha H. Owen and S. W. Shackelford. These two sisters turned over the church property to the Muscle Shoals Association, to be kept in trust, and the interest used for missions, and when a new Baptist Church should be constituted at Courtland the property and money on hand to be turned over to that church. The property consisted of a most beautiful lot, in the heart of the town, and the old church house, which soon fell down. The remains of the old house were sold, and the proceeds, amounting to \$200, were turned over to the executive board. This amount is now out at interest.

The deacons of the church besides Brother Ashford were Joseph Sanders and M. W. Mays. The clerks were Samuel Oates, M. W. Mays, and A. G. Owen. Dr. Joseph H. Eaton, President of Union University, preached for this church in 1857. The year the church house was built and dedicated, he preached the dedicatory sermon.

The Courtland Church presented a plan for missionary work to the association in 1846, which was ultimately adopted. This church, with Carmel and Mt. Pleasant Churches were the leaders in the missionary movement which resulted in bringing the association to enter upon the work of missions. Such men as Leigh, Townes, Bestor, Ashford, Mays, and Jarman kept urging the matter until the work was accomplished. In 1832, the church gave authority to its delegates to withdraw from the association, if they thought it conducive to the harmony of the churches generally to do so, and for the churches in the Tennessee Valley to form a new association. This was on account of the anti-missionary spirit manifested by the association. But it was not done.

LIBERTY CHURCH.

This church was constituted about the year 1830, Elders Jeremiah Burns and Josiah Barker being the presbytery. The constituent members were Thomas Gibson and wife Mary, Malinda Partlow, Mary Mastin, Lewis D. Massengale, Mary Massengale, Silas Fowler, Rachel Battle, James Gibson, Eliza Hughes, Henry Phillips and wife. It was originally located about ten miles Northwest from Courtland, near a place now called "Red Banks," but after the war was removed to Jonesboro, a town on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, five miles west of Courtland. The town is now called Town Creek. In 1856, when the writer first became acquainted with the church, it had a large and commodious church building. The house was also removed to Jonesboro, and now stands there, very much out of repair, but can be made a comfortable church house by the expenditure of a little money. The writer was personally acquainted with several of the constituent members—the last one, Deacon Silas Fowler, died a few years ago at his daughter's, Mrs. George King, near Leighton. He was a most excellent man and a good Christian. He died the death of the righteous.

The pastors of the church were the following in the order of their names: Josiah Barker, Wm. Leigh, John L. Townes, Henry W. Hodges, — Dupree, Ambrose Gilbert, from 1842-43; Samuel Wood, four years, to 1847. Brothers J. C. Vincent and Cummings, missionaries, served until the close of 1850. Elder J. Gunn, three years, and after him Elder W. H. Barksdale, until 1858. Elder Jos. Shackelford was pastor in 1859. During the war it was without a pastor, and its light almost went out, and for several years afterwards there was no regular

preaching, except by missionaries. In September, 1872, it united with Pilgrims' Rest Church, which was located a few miles south of Jonesboro. The new organization was called Jonesboro Baptist Church for awhile, but assumed the name of the old church in October, 1873. Elders S. M. Steenson and W. A. Agee constituted the presbytery that organized the new church. There were forty-four members in the new organization. Since that time the following brethren have been pastors: S. M. Steenson, three years; W. A. Agee, two years; J. R. Nesmith, one year; James S. Gibson, one year; J. I. Stockton, three years; J. Gunn, one year; John Speer, one or two years as missionary pastor. In 1889, when the church was almost disbanded, Elder J. B. Huckabee, missionary, visited the church and had regular appointments. The church was revived and nineteen members were gathered up. God's blessings attended his efforts, and now (1890) the church has fifty-seven members, and is in good working order. Liberty Church has had some noble working members. Deacons L. D. Massengale and Edward Stanley were excellent men, and uncompromising Baptists.

SHILO CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY.

This was one among the oldest churches in the Association. We have not been able to find the old church book, but from the one we have, which goes back to 1840, we learn that it had been organized many years before. It joined the association in 1828, on a letter from Flint River Association. In an obituary notice of Deacon James Echols, which is recorded in the minute book we have, it is stated that he had been a deacon of the church for about thirty-eight years, and that he moved to Alabama in 1818. He died November 12, 1856. This would

lead us to suppose that the church was organized about 1818. This church was located five or six miles Northeast from Somerville. It was once a strong church, but has gone down. The last time that it was represented in the association was in 1881. It then reported nineteen members. Most of its members went to Blue Spring Church, which was only a few miles from the old church house. We know not who were the pastors previous to 1840. Our record commences with that date, except we know that James Echols was deacon. The pastors since that time, as we learn from the record, were Sylvanus Gibson, who served ten years; W. R. Steeley, Wm. Lucas, Enoch Windes, E. W. Benson, M. A. Verser, W. W. Wilhite, J. K. Lynn, T. G. Underwood, T. J. Weaver, John E. Weaver, Jno. M. Simpson, and B. Williams. The clerks have been S. W. J. Benson, E. Easton, Wm. Irwin, James Tapscott, E. W. Pope, Wm. Harwood, S. N. Reeves, W. T. Morrow, L. M. Lynn, W. H. McClure. The deacons were James Echols, John Holmes, S. W. J. Benson, James Tapscott, John J. Thompson, Archibald Tapscott, M. W. Lynn, and Jonathan Collins. There were several ordained and licensed preachers in this church. Wm. Irwin was ordained in this church in January, 1845. The presbytery were Elders S. Gibson, J. Cummings, and J. C. Vincent. Brother Benson was a licensed minister, and preached for the church frequently. For some cause, not mentioned, he had his name erased from the roll. In June, 1844, Elder Gibson charged one Lewis Johnson with defaming his ministerial character, and the character of the church. The case was tried at the July meeting, and Johnson was excluded. He afterwards became a member of Guntersville Church. Complaint was made to the association by Shilo Church, against Guntersville Church, for receiving an excluded

member of Shilo Church. The association sent a committee to labor with the Guntersville Church, and get it to rescind its action, and send Johnson back to Shilo Church to make his acknowledgments. She would not do this, and Johnson would not go in person to Shilo Church to make his acknowledgments, but wrote to the Church. The church would not receive this. Finally the association withdrew fellowship from Guntersville Church.

FRIENDSHIP CHURCH, LAWRENCE COUNTY.

We have no record book of this church, and we have to gather our information concerning it from the minutes of the association. We note that it was received into the association in 1830. It must have been organized a short time before this. From the Hopewell Church book we notice that aid was asked by Friendship Church, in 1831, of Hopewell Church, to settle some difficulty in that church. Who its pastors and deacons and clerks were, we have no means of finding out. In 1840, it was represented in the association by Samuel W. Echols, James Simpson, and Edmond Dutton. It then had thirty-seven members. When the association, in 1846, took a stand in favor of missionary effort, a number of churches left the association, and some divided. Friendship Church divided, and there were two organizations, each calling itself Friendship Church. We notice in the minutes of the association of 1853, that Friendship Church was represented by Brothers James Simpson, G. Norwood, and P. Chitwood. Its membership was twenty-nine, and Elder W. W. Wilhite was pastor. It was not represented again until 1859, and then only by letter. Its membership was reported to be only fourteen, and Wm. Wright its pastor. There seems to have been no representation until 1872 from the church, when it was

received as a new church, James Simpson, its delegate; number of members, eleven. It has generally represented itself in the association since 1880. We remember that a few years after the war, perhaps it was in 1867 or 1868, we visited this church with Elder G. A. Coulson, and held a meeting of days. Large crowds attended, and there was considerable interest. There were over twenty conversions, mostly young people, and we found fully as many more in the congregation who confessed to having a hope, but were not connected with any church. We could get very few of them to join the church. The reason was, as we found out, that most of these young people were the children of our anti-missionary Baptist brethren, or connected with them in some way, they would not join their parents' church, and they did not like to join a church their parents opposed, hence they remained out of the church. An effort was made to bring the two parties together, but was unsuccessful. Old Father Dutton, as he was called, was the leader of the anti-missionary party. He was willing to unite, provided the united body would not join any association. Brother James Simpson, who was the leader of the missionary party, was not willing to do this, so the effort to consolidate the two parties failed. The missionary church is growing slowly, its number reported in 1889 was twenty-six. Elder S. R. C. Adams preached to this church in 1881. Since that time it has been supplied by Elder T. J. Weaver, the missionary of the association. It is situated three or four miles southwest of Danville.

MOULTON CHURCH.

This church was received into the association in 1849. We suppose it was organized in the same year. Salem Church was only a short distance from Moulton, and

those Baptists who lived in the town previous to this were members of Salem Church. We have no church record, hence cannot tell who were the constituent members of the church. We judge, however, that Brother F. C. Owen was one of them, and perhaps Isaac N. Owen. In 1853, R. B. Burleson, I. N. Owen and F. C. Owen were the delegates. Its membership then was 106. Elder R. B. Burleson was the pastor then, and we suppose he was from the first as he located in Moulton about the time the church was organized, and he doubtless was the prime mover in its organization. He was teaching in Moulton, and when the association determined to have a female school, his school was adopted by the trustees and made the school of the association at its session of 1850. Elder Burleson remained pastor until 1855, when he resigned the charge of the school and the pastoral care of the church and removed to Texas. In 1856, Elder Jos. Shackelford, who had been elected principal of the school took charge of the church and was its pastor until 1859, when he resigned, when Elder Gunn was chosen and served one year. In 1860, Elder Jos. Shackelford was again chosen pastor and had charge of the church until 1867, when he resigned and removed to Tuscumbia. Elder T. W. Tobey preached for the church for a short time in 1867. Then Elder John L. Lattimore, who had been elected principal of the Female Institute was chosen pastor and had charge of the church until he left for Texas, in 1874. In 1875, Elder J. G. Nash was pastor. In 1876, Elders J. S. Gibson and C. W. Elkins were co-pastors. In 1878, C. W. Elkins was pastor. Elder Shackelford became pastor again in 1879, and continued until the close of 1881. He was succeeded by Elder Mat. Lyon, who remained pastor until 1889. Elder R. T. Wear succeeded him in 1890 and was pastor one year. Elder T.

R. Bragg is the present pastor. The deacons, so far as we remember, were F. C. Owen, James Wise, J. Y. Shoemaker, W. A. Gilbert.

C. G. Lynch was clerk for many years. We do not remember the other clerks.

The Moulton Church has not grown much for the last twenty years, in fact, it has decreased in numbers. Its report of membership in 1889 was forty-seven. It has always been a liberal church in its contributions to the various benevolent objects fostered by the association. It has had some noble men in its membership who have passed away, among whom may be mentioned, F. C. Owen, Isaac N. Owen, Wm. Harris and J. Y. Shoemaker.

MACEDONIA CHURCH, FRANKLIN COUNTY.

This church was organized on Saturday before the fourth Lord's Day, in July, 1843. Elders A. L. Stovall, Sylvanus Gibson and Theophilous Skinner being the presbytery. The church was organized where the church house now stands, two and one-half miles east of Newburg, on the road from Moulton to Russellville.

The following were the constituent members: Thomas Chiles, Lucy Chiles, S. H. Burrass, Sarah Burrass, Edmond Russell, Leah J. Russell, George Russell, Johnson Howell, Amanda Byles, Zachariah Tungate, Joanna Tungate, Peter King, Patience King, George D. Cleere, Elizabeth Cleere, Nancy Shikle, Barbary Shikle, John Barker, Nancy H. Barker, Nancy Barker, Amanda McClusky, Rachael Yocum, Hubbard McCarver, H. C. Tubbs, Mary McCarver, Richard Russell, Jane Yocum, Eliza P. Nolan, Malinda Long, Zadoc Long, Jennie Yocum.

Elder A. L. Stovall was the first pastor and served the church until about the time he left the State for Mississippi in 1852. Elder R. J. Jennings was called in 1853

and served to 1855. In 1856, Elder J. C. Roberts was called and served until 1860, when Elder W. Balch became pastor, who served one year. In 1861, Elder M. Finney was pastor and served several years. Elder J. C. Roberts was pastor in 1865. He was succeeded by Elder R. J. Jennings. J. R. Nesmith was pastor in 1870 and 1871; M. Finney, in 1873; E. R. Little, in 1876; J. C. Roberts, in 1878-80; and Elder Finney has been the pastor for the last ten years.

John Barker was the first clerk, and George D. Cleere and Edmund Russell were the first deacons. The church appointed the regular day of meeting to be Saturday before the third Sabbath in each month, and it has never been changed. It represented itself in the association in 1843. Thos. Chiles and George Russell were chosen deacons in 1845. Edmund Russell had been licensed to preach, and had also been lettered out. At the August meeting, 1847, George D. Russell was licensed to preach, and in September, 1849, he was called to ordination. Elder J. C. Vincent and A. L. Stovall constituted the presbytery. H. A. Henley, J. M. Rucker and John Tubbs are the present deacons, and J. M. Rucker is the clerk. This church, like many others, has had its blessings and joys, its sorrows and disappointment, its times of refreshing and its times of barrenness and apathy, but she stands today a living witness of the past and the present, for Christ, and we trust that her candlestick may never be removed until Christ shall come to receive His own. Her present membership as reported is eighty-one.

SHOAL CREEK CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY.

This church is situated in Morgan county about six or seven miles east of the village of Flint, on the Louisville and Nashville railroad. It was constituted on the second

Sabbath in March, 1844, Elders Jos. Vinson, Richard B. Burleson being the presbytery. The following were the constituent members: David M. Lowery, Annie Edwards, S. F. A. Yeager, James E. Yeager, Elizabeth Yeager, Ira Yeager, Jane Yeager, Jeremiah Romines, Mary Romines, Susan H. Romines, David R. Romines, Elizabeth Adams, Catherine Welch, Minnie Simes, G. W. Wallace, Mary Wallace, Mindora Simes, Ann Yeager, Lucinda Welch. The first deacons were Ira Yeager, David Lowery, and G. W. Wallace. Their successors were as follows: Christopher Wright, G. W. Tapscott, W. T. Collier, Henry Livingston, W. T. Cobbs and William Halbrooks. The first clerk was S. F. A. Yeager, followed by Brothers C. A. Wright, C. Ratliff, J. H. Red and E. T. Spain, who is the present clerk. The first pastor was Elder J. C. Vincent, in 1845. His successors were as follows: Elders Gwin, in 1845; E. W. Benson, in 1848, for a short time, then C. Wright, succeeded in 1854, by M. A. Verser. He was succeeded, in 1873, by Elder W. W. Wilhite. In 1875, Elder C. W. Callahan was pastor. Elder W. B. Carter followed him in 1877 and continued until 1885. Elder J. D. McClanahan was pastor from 1885 to 1887. Elder H. J. Halbrooks was pastor in 1887, Elder J. I. Stockton in 1888, and Elder J. N. Thompson, in 1889. The present pastor is Elder J. E. Roan. The membership as reported in 1890 was eighty-five. Other churches rising up around it have somewhat reduced its strength.

TUSCUMBIA CHURCH.

We are not able to tell the exact date when this church was organized nor its constituent members. Elder R. B. Burleson was called to the Tuscumbia Church in 1845, and went there from Athens, Alabama, and remained its pastor until 1848, when he went to Moulton. It is highly

probable that Tuscumbia Church was organized just after La Grange Church was dissolved, which was in 1843. Brother Edmund Ellet, who was a member of La Grange Church, was afterwards a member of Tuscumbia Church. The church property at La Grange was sold and the money expended in buying a house of worship at Tuscumbia for the Baptist Church. This we learned from Brother Ellet himself, who, as deacon and one of the surviving members of La Grange Church, was authorized to sell and purchase.

Elder J. Gunn was called to the church in 1849 and served it for four years, giving it half his time. Elder Woodlief Thomas succeeded him in 1853 and was pastor three years. He was succeeded by Elder J. Gunn, who served the church as pastor until 1861. The war and the movement of the armies prevented further labors on his part. During the war nothing was done. In 1866, Elder G. A. Coulson, now of Texas, became pastor, he served until 1867. He was succeeded by Elder Jos. Shackelford in 1868, who was pastor until 1876. In the winter of 1876-7, he resigned and went to Arkansas. Elder J. Gunn succeeded him and preached to the church for several years, from 1877 to 1880. In 1880, Elder T. B. Craighead was pastor. He was succeeded by Elder C. W. Hare, who served the church in 1881-2. In 1884, Elder A. J. Ashburn was pastor. In 1885, Elder W. H. Barksdale was pastor. He was succeeded by Elder Gunn, who was succeeded in 1887 by Elder J. M. Thomas. Elder J. E. Herring was pastor in 1889 and part of 1890. Elder J. C. Hudson is now the pastor.

Brother John D. Inman was the clerk of the church for many years. A. L. Moody is the present clerk. Edmund Ellet, Macklin Sledge, F. M. Belue, Brother Lloyd, John D. Inman have been the deacons. There may have

been other deacons, but we have not been able to secure the names. This church has always been weak in numbers and financially. They had a good brick house of worship, but its walls were cracked and it was thought that it was dangerous. They have torn it down and are now building a new house. The work proceeds slowly because of want of money. Tuscumbia is a growing town, now having more than 3,000 inhabitants. The Baptists should not be behind others, but press forward with earnestness to occupy the field.

PLEASANT HILL CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY.

This church is located about eight miles southwest of Decatur, on what is called the "old Decatur and Moulton road." The original church was constituted about 1843 or 1844, as it was received into the association in 1844. It was reorganized in 1866. Prior to this it had been a church of some interest, with Elder Wm. Lucas as pastor, but he having moved to Texas, Elder Wm. Thompson became the efficient pastor, and held his position up to the late war, during which he died. Many of the members died, or were killed, and moved away, so that at the close of the war there were but three male members, namely, John Prater, James Anderton, and Brother Gregory, and a few sisters left. The house was dilapidated, and everything out of fix. In the year 1866, Elder J. Gunn began to preach there, and soon an interest was awakened, and large congregations greeted him at every service. During the year about sixty members were received by experience and baptism. With this new life and new force there was built a new and comfortable house of worship, and everything moved on well. This state of things lasted during the ten years that Elder Gunn was pastor, and many additions made to the church every year. The

aggregate of baptisms during these ten years was not less than four hundred. Elder W. B. Carter followed Elder Gunn as pastor, then Elder Jos. Shackelford, and after him, Elder J. I. Stockton and Elder W. T. Cobbs, who is the present pastor. The church has not grown very much within the last ten years. There are several causes for this. A number of the members have gone off to organize other churches; there have been some internal disturbances, which have had a tendency to weaken the church in spirituality, if in nothing else, and it has been a difficult thing for the members to bring themselves up to the duty of supporting their pastor. They had been so long accustomed to get their preaching without paying anything for it, that it was a hard matter for many to accommodate themselves to the changed condition of things. We are glad to learn that the church is supporting its pastor now better and more promptly than they have ever done. Brother John Prater, Thos. Prater, Jos. Robertson, and Rufus Eddy were deacons of this church under the new organization. Brother John S. Hale was the clerk for a long time; Brother W. R. Simpson is the present clerk. From this church Elders Charles W. Callahan and S. R. C. Adams received their ordination. It was from this church that letters were obtained by a large part of the members who constituted Hillsboro and Macedonia churches.

DECATUR CHURCH.

We are not able to find out the exact date of the constitution of this church. The deed to the church lot is dated February 23, 1842. It is probable there was an organization about this time, but there is no record of its connecting itself with the association until 1847. Elder Edmiston was pastor, and perhaps had something to do

with organizing the church. Brethren A. Houk, Dr. A. A. Burleson, W. H. Davis, Thos. Bellew, Wm. Callahan, James H. Wells, and Hopkins Houk were the male members, and their wives, mothers and sisters were also members; probably they were the organic members, with some others whose names we have not been able to procure. Elder John H. Edmiston resigned in 1853, and Elder G. D. Russell became pastor for that year. He was succeeded in 1854 by Elder J. Gunn, who served the church until 1856, when Elder E. D. Miller of Kentucky, now of Mississippi, became pastor and served one year. In 1857, Elder Gunn became pastor again, and served until 1859; then a licentiate, Thomas Nicholson, supplied the church for a short time in 1859-60. From 1862 to the close of the war, 1865, Decatur was occupied by the federal troops, except for a few months in 1863-4. The house of worship, a good brick structure, worth at least \$1500, was totally destroyed, all the bricks being removed. The members were scattered, as the citizens were forced to leave the town. A few of the members returned and made an effort to rebuild, but were unfortunate in the selection of a minister to aid them, who embezzled most of the funds he collected and left. They kept up their organization, however, and the Presbyterians, who had been able to build a small house, gave them the use of it for preaching once a month. Elder Gunn, whose membership was in this church, preached for the church from time to time. An effort was made by Elder R. A. Windes to raise money to build a house in 1874-5. He secured some money and lumber, but not enough to justify commencing to build. Elder Kone had previously made an effort in 1870. In 1879, Elder Jos. Shackelford took charge of the church as pastor, and preached to it (with the exception of about one year in 1881-2,

when Elder F. C. David, State Missionary, preached for it) until 1886. The effort to build was continued, and Brother David got up more funds and commenced building. In 1883, Elder Shackelford again became pastor, he having retired, in order that Elder David might give his attention to building the house of worship, as Shackelford, being engaged in teaching, was not able to do this. The house was finished and dedicated in July, 1883, Elder W. C. Cleveland, D. D., preaching the dedicatory sermon. Elder Shackelford having resigned, Elder W. T. Browning was pastor, in 1887. In 1888, Elder D. W. Gwin, D. D., was pastor, entering on his work in the spring, and continued until 1889, when he resigned and went to Norfolk, Va. Elder W. M. Blackwelder succeeded Dr. Gwin, and is the present pastor. This church has been assisted for several years by the State Mission Board and by the association. It has now, we are glad to say, become self-supporting, and is growing under its present pastor. The church has a parsonage, which has been built within the last year, through the energy and perseverance of the sisters of the church. No church has a more faithful band of Christian women than the Decatur Church. There are some of them who have stood by the church in its darkest hours, and have done what they could ; they have been with it in sunshine and in storm. It has a good comfortable house of worship, not very large, but sufficient for present wants. The little church has had many difficulties to contend against. In 1878, Decatur was visited by that dreadful scourge, the yellow fever, and again in 1888. The church suffered by both epidemics. At no time very strong, either in members or wealth, it has never been able, until recently, to sustain a pastor. In 1887, what was called a "boom" struck Decatur; real estate increased in value very rapidly, peo-

ple flocked to the town from all directions, and the population soon doubled itself. The church was also strengthened by this influx of people. The yellow fever epidemic of 1888 had its effect upon the prosperity of the town, as well as upon the church. Its growth has not been so fast since, but perhaps more solid. In the two towns of Decatur and New Decatur the population is over 7,000.

Brother James H. Wells was a deacon of the church for many years, until his death in 1883 or 1884; Brother A. Houk was also a deacon. Brother Henry C. Gilbert was ordained deacon during the pastorate of Elder Shackelford; he and Brother Malone are the deacons at this time. Brother John A. Thomason is the present clerk, and has been for several years. The church has a good Sabbath school, numbering about 100. Its membership as reported in 1890 was 102.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, NEW DECATUR.

The town of Decatur consists of two corporations, although it is in reality all one town, and ought to be so in law. In 1889, a number of brethren and sisters, living in that part of the town called East Decatur, constituted themselves into a church, which they called the First Baptist Church of New Decatur. It was organized on the third day of October, 1889, with fourteen members. The following were the constituent members: D. W. Dooley, Mrs. M. A. Dooley, J. C. Lance, Mrs. T. A. Lance, J. T. Chenault, Mrs. S. A. Chenault, J. J. Sawyers, Mrs. S. R. Sawyers, Miss Lizzie Sawyers, W. C. Buck, Mrs. M. E. Buck, E. S. Skillington, Mrs. E. Skillington, Miss S. E. Dooley; Elders J. D. McClanahan and J. M. Simpson being the presbytery. They have built them a small house of worship, and have a good Sabbath school. The church joined the association at its last session in Falkville in

October, 1890. Elder John Speer was their first pastor, supported in part by the Muscle Shoals Association and the State Mission Board. He resigned in October, 1890. The number of members reported to the association was thirty-eight. W. C. Buck is the clerk and Brothers J. J. Sawyers and A. M. Lee, the deacons.

HILLSBORO CHURCH.

This church was organized as the Gilmerville Baptist Church, in 1873. The name of the village was then Gilmerville. It was changed to Hillsboro in 1875. This little town is about twelve miles west of Decatur, on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, in Lawrence county. Its present population is about 250. Elder J. Gunn was one of the presbytery in organizing the church, and was its first pastor, and continued until 1875, when Elder Charles W. Callahan became pastor. In 1877, Elder C. W. Elkins became pastor and continued until 1879. In September, 1879, Elder Jos. Shackelford was called to the pastoral care of the church, and accepted. He has been pastor ever since. S. J. Porter and W. T. Watts were the first deacons. The first named is living, the latter is dead. In 1877, W. J. Hendrix was elected deacon, and in 1881, J. W. Wallace was elected deacon. Brothers Porter and Wallace are the present deacons. Brother J. H. Gunn was the first clerk. Brother Joel Cottingham succeeded him at his death. Brother Cottingham also died and was succeeded by Brother A. J. Brown, in 1880. Brother W. F. Berry succeeded him. The present clerk is Brother Wm. J. Cottingham.

In 1879, when the present pastor took charge of the church, the house of worship used was a very uncomfortable building and was a union house. He urged the church to build or buy that house and repair it. They

bought the house and repaired it, and worshiped in it until 1888. In April, 1877, the church resolved to build a new house. This was completed and dedicated in August, 1888. It is a beautiful building, large and comfortable, with a baptistery in it. Since that time the church has gradually grown, not so much in numbers as in efficiency. In 1879, the amount given for missions was \$15, now it gives \$50 for missions and has doubled its pastor's salary. It keeps up a good Sabbath School. Its membership reported at the last association was seventy-five.

MT. NEBO CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY.

This church was constituted on the third Sabbath in October, 1869. The presbytery consisted of Elders D. A. Nunn, W. C. Witt, J. C. Cox and J. L. Witt. The constituent members were J. C. Cox, W. C. Witt, Josey Witt, John W. Gibson, Mary Gibson, John Gibson, L. L. Gibson, D. W. Sherrell, R. B. Gibson, Sarah Sherrell, J. H. Day, J. D. Turentine. The first pastor was W. C. Witt who served from October, 1867, to March, 1872. Elder W. W. Wilhite was the second pastor, serving from March, 1872, to October, 1874. Elder W. B. Carter followed him, and served to February, 1878. He was succeeded by Elder S. R. C. Adams, who served until October, 1880. Elder Carter again took charge of the church and served until December, 1887, when Elder W. T. Cobbs, its present pastor took charge. The following have been the deacons: Richard B. Gibson, John B. Gibson, J. R. Witt, R. B. Minter. The clerks have been J. C. Cox, R. B. Day, R. B. Gibson. This church has had some difficulties to contend with in its progress. Their house of worship was burned down, at one time, several years ago. It has had to contend with a great deal of

false doctrine which was disseminated in its midst. It is now, however, in a prosperous condition. It is in a populous neighborhood and its spiritual condition is better than it has been for years. Its missionary spirit has increased very much in recent years and it may now be considered one of our growing churches. Its present membership is seventy-six. It has a Sunday School with fifty pupils.

MT. ZION CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY.

This church was constituted May 8, 1853, Elders Enoch Windes, W. W. Wilhite, J. K. Lynn and M. A. Verser, being the presbytery. The following brethren and sisters were the constituent members: Samuel Francis, Elizabeth Francis, James Tapscott, John W. Francis, C. L. Wilhite, S. L. Wilhite, Lucinda Francis. Elder W. W. Wilhite was the first pastor, and remained the pastor until 1868. From September, 1868, to September, 1869, there was no pastor. Elder W. G. W. Smith was pastor from 1869, to September, 1875. Elder C. W. Callahan, was pastor from 1875 to 1877. From September, 1877, to 1878, there was no pastor. Elder J. N. Thompson was pastor from September, 1878, to September, 1881. In 1881-2, Elder S. R. C. Adams was pastor, Elder Stamps succeeded him, and was pastor to 1884. No pastor for the next year, but Elders Adams, Smith and Thompson preached for the church; in 1885-6, Elder Smith was pastor; in 1886-7, Elder C. A. Owen; in 1887, Elder Smith became pastor again, and has continued until the present time. The clerks have been Brothers James Tapscott, J. J. Thompson, C. T. Martin and W. P. Key. The names of the deacons have not been given me. Elders J. N. Thompson and W. G. W. Smith were ordained in this church. This church is in the midst of

a prosperous neighborhood and has it in its power to accomplish much good for the Master. Its total membership reported to the association was seventy-two.

ROCKY CREEK CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY.

This church is situated in the eastern part of Morgan county, near what is called Lawrence's Cove. It was organized September 6th, 1867, Elders O. Lawrence, and John Holmes being the presbytery. The constituent members were Jessee J. Weaver, Jacob Holmes, W. C. Denson, J. C. Oden, Reuben M. Holmes, Martha J. Holmes, Mary A. Weaver, Sarah A. Denson, Lucretia Smith. Jessee J. Weaver and Jacob Holmes were received into the organization as deacons, and are deacons of the church now, and fill their office with honor. W. S. Weaver and W. T. Cobbs were received as deacons, and acted as such, until they removed their membership to other churches. W. C. Denson was the first clerk, he was succeeded by T. L. Simpson, who was followed by S. L. Weaver, who held the office until his death in 1885. T. L. Simpson was again made clerk, and continued until 1887, when he removed to Falkville. J. A. Oden is the present clerk. The church book shows that these brethren were faithful in the performance of their duties. There was no regular pastor for the first year. In August, 1868, Elder Butler Williams was chosen pastor. In 1871, he was succeeded by Elder W. G. W. Smith, who served one year. In 1872, Butler Williams was chosen again, and served the church three years. When old and infirm he retired from the pastorate, and Elder Thomas J. Weaver was chosen pastor. In 1884, he resigned, and Elder John E. Weaver became pastor, and has been ever since. The church first joined Warrior River Association, and remained in it several years. In

1881, it joined Muscle Shoals Association. Four ministers have been sent out by this church, viz: G. W. Ford, Thos. J. Weaver, J. E. Weaver and John W. Hood. It has also received two ordained ministers, viz: Butler Williams, from Georgia, and Wm. M. Simpson, from Colbert county, Alabama. This church has had an eventful history. Organized with only nine members, under the care of Elder Butler Williams, it increased in members, and soon became the strongest church in that part of the county. After the change of pastors, the inexperience of the young pastor, T. J. Weaver, was such, that he was not able to hold together the different elements which had been brought into the church. Division of sentiment and doctrine soon manifested itself. The anti-missionary spirit developed itself by a resolution offered to declare non-fellowship, with all Bible and tract societies, all the benevolent institutions and missionary organizations. A division followed. The missionary part held the church house, and soon developed in the same channel of life and power which it had before enjoyed. The young pastor, with a church free of strife enjoyed many precious revivals of grace, in which numbers were brought to know their Saviour.

This prosperity was followed by another contention upon associational attachments, which was harmonized, and another church formed, which attached itself to Cullman association, leaving the old church very small in numbers and dispirited. T. J. Weaver resigned and J. E. Weaver became pastor. Years passed and much discouragement followed. Many members went to other churches, while others lost their interest and would not attend church. In 1888, new determinations were made, negligent members were admonished to duty, and those who would not take up their cross were excluded. Strict

discipline was exercised and the church began to revive and now promises well for the future. The number of members reported at the last association was twenty-six.

BETHEL CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY.

This church is situated about two miles northeast of Hartsell, Morgan county. It was constituted on Saturday before the first Sabbath in October, 1872, by Elders W. W. Wilhite and G. W. Tapscott, deacons. The following were the constituent members: John B. Short, J. D. McClanahan, Samuel Trotman, Will McClanahan, Matilda Short, Serena McClanahan, Judy C. Hartsell, Elizabeth Short and Tempe J. McClanahan. Elder J. N. Thompson was first pastor and J. D. McClanahan, clerk. J. C. Hartsell and Samuel Trotman were the first deacons. The church was received into the association at its session in 1873, at Bethel Church, Lawrence county. In 1875, J. D. McClanahan was chosen deacon and J. C. Love, clerk. The latter is clerk now. Elder Thompson served as pastor until September, 1879. He was succeeded by Elder W. B. Carter, who served the church until September, 1883. Elder J. D. McClanahan was pastor in 1883-4. Elder Carter again took charge and served until September, 1886. Elder J. I. Stockton succeeded him and is the present pastor. F. M. Reeves, S. H. Ponder and B. H. Yeager were ordained deacons in 1886, at February meeting.

This church has sent out several ministers. F. M. Yeager was ordained in July, 1877, and J. D. McClanahan was ordained in January, 1879.

GUM SPRING CHURCH, LAWRENCE COUNTY.

This church is located in Lawrence county near Hatton post-office, about ten miles northwest of Moulton. It

was organized on the fifth of August, 1881, Elders J. J. Stamps and J. R. Nesmith constituting the presbytery. The following persons were the constituent members: M. A. Gray, Ann E. Gray, E. J. Gray, John Finney, M. F. Finney, W. F. Robertson, T. C. Robertson, J. D. Haggood, W. H. Mustin, R. M. Roden, Adaline Roden, S. C. Young, M. C. Young and C. P. Young. Elder J. R. Nesmith was the first pastor and served until 1887. Elder J. M. Roberts is the present pastor and has been for several years. Brother G. W. Bond is the present clerk. Who the deacons are or have been, we have not been able to find out. It reported to the last association fifty-five members and a Sunday School. This church is located in a good neighborhood and has a fine field for work.

GUM SPRING, MORGAN COUNTY.

We have not been able to get from the pastor or clerk of this church any information whatever. We therefore have to rely upon what the minutes of the association give us. It is located in Morgan county, between Somerville and Falkville, perhaps nearer Falkville than Somerville. When it was organized we do not know. Neither do the minutes of the association show when it was received into that body. We suppose, however, that it was at its session at Mt. Pisgah in 1878, as its name appears in the minutes of that year for the first time. The delegates from the church to the association that year were W. H. Ward, J. E. Roan and J. W. Tapscott. Its total membership reported then was thirty. In 1879, Elder W. B. Carter is reported as its pastor, and its membership thirty-seven. We suppose that the church was probably constituted in 1877, and Brother Carter was its first pastor, as he informs us, he was pastor of this church four years. Elder J. D. McClanahan became pastor in

1880, and served until 1884, when Elder J. E. Roan became pastor. He served one year. Elder J. M. Simpson was pastor in 1885; J. D. McClanahan in 1886. J. E. Roan became pastor again in 1887 and is its present pastor. E. J. Pannell is the present clerk. Number of members reported to the last association was sixty-six.

MACEDONIA CHURCH, MORGAN COUNTY.

This church is located some four or five miles west of Flint Station, on the L. & N. R. R. It was organized on the last Monday in September, 1879 with twelve members, by Elder J. D. McClanahan and F. M. Yeager as a presbytery. Enoch Walraven and John Bramlet were the first deacons. The others since were Charles Rabun and J. W. Swilling. The clerks have been J. S. Brumlow and S. M. Smith. Brother Brumlow is the present clerk. Elder J. D. McClanahan served as pastor six years. Elder J. M. Roberts followed him and served two years. Elder John Speer was chosen pastor next and is still pastor. Under the pastorate of Elder McClanahan there were about 100 additions. It was received into the association at its session at Bethel Church, Lawrence county, in 1879, and reported eighteen members. It reported at the last association seventy-one members. Sometimes this church reports a Sunday school and sometimes none. It is in a very thickly settled neighborhood and it ought to keep up a Sunday School all the time.

OKOLONA CHURCH.

This church is situated in the western part of Lawrence County. It joined the association in the year 1850. When it was organized and who were the constituent members we do not know, as we have been unable to get the records. We presume that it was organized in 1850, or a little while

before that. In 1855, it had sixty-three members, and Elder T. S. Carson was its pastor. He was also a delegate to the association from that church. He was pastor for several years. The church was not represented in 1858-9. In 1860, it was represented by T. S. Carson, T. H. Nesmith and John W. Reeves, who reported forty-three members, with no pastor. In 1861, Wm. Balch was its pastor, with a reported membership of ninety-two. It seems to have more than doubled its membership in one year. Brother Sam'l W. Wallace was a member of this church at that time, and probably its clerk. Elder Balch was pastor in 1862. In 1863 or 1865, John Sherrell was pastor and probably continued until 1868. In 1869-70, E. R. Little was pastor. Elder J. R. Nesmith was pastor in 1871, J. S. Gibson in 1872, R. T. Wear in 1873, and we suppose, in 1874 and 1875. In 1876, Wear and Gibson preached to the church alternately. In 1879, S. M. Steenson was pastor. Since then, the pastors have been W. C. Summers, John Speers, J. S. Gibson, L. P. Craig, John R. Nesmith. Isaac Bradford is its present pastor. Its clerk is J. J. Beck. Total membership reported, fifty-one. Who the deacons are or have been we are not able to say. We have asked for the information several times but failed to get it.

NEW HOPE CHURCH, LAWRENCE COUNTY.

This church is located about six miles south of Courtland. We have not been able to get the church book, and our information concerning it is gleaned from the minutes of the association, and our personal knowledge of it, as we have known something about the church for the last thirty years. It was constituted about the year 1854, and was received into the association that year at its session in Moulton. We are not informed who con-

stituted the presbytery. Elder W. A. Cooper was pastor in 1855. It had then fourteen members. In 1856, H. H. Crow was a delegate to the association. W. H. Cooper was reported as its pastor in 1857, he was also a member at the time. In 1858, it was not represented.

In 1859, H. H. Crow was its delegate and P. H. Mays, its pastor, with a membership of nine. In 1860, Wm. Spain was its pastor. A revival reported and eleven additions by baptism. From 1861 to 1864 no representation. In 1865, it was represented, no pastor. It was not represented in 1868. In 1869, Elder J. C. Roberts was its pastor, and its membership reported, twenty-six. In 1870, Wm. Spain was its pastor, and its membership thirty-two. In 1871 there was no report. In 1872, J. P. Bragg was pastor. J. M. Roberts has been pastor most of the time from 1873 to 1889. Since then, Brother J. W. Sandlin has been pastor. H. H. Crow is its present clerk. Its members reported, twenty-seven. This is a small church, and the neighborhood in which it is, is not thickly settled. The Crow family have been its principal members. It has not had much aggressiveness about it. Sometimes it has contributed to foreign missions, but often it has contributed nothing. It seems wanting in missionary spirit.

LEBANON CHURCH.

This church is situated in Morgan county, five or six miles southwest of Hartsell. It was organized November 28, 1852. We suppose that Brothers W. R. Steeley, W. W. Wilhite, and A. W. Nunn constituted the presbytery, though the record does not say so, but they are mentioned as taking a part in the constitution.

The following were the constituent members: A. M. Wilhite, J. P. Wilhite, E. W. Crow, Elizabeth Crow, J. C. Alexander, Elizabeth Wilhite, Francis Dunnaway.

The following are the pastors in regular order: A. W. Nunn, served five years; F. M. Halbrooks, one year; W. W. Wilhite, five years; C. B. Wilhite, one year; J. N. Thompson, one year; W. W. Wilhite, three years; Wm. Witt, one year; W. W. Wilhite, two years; J. N. Thompson, two years; T. J. Weaver, one year; C. W. McClellan, one year; S. R. C. Adams, two years; J. N. Thompson, one year; J. D. McClanahan; the present pastor, nine years.

The deacons have been Brothers James Z. Morris, E. P. McClanahan, S. J. Wilhite, H. J. Chaney, H. B. Kimbrough, W. H. Junkins.

The clerks have been the following brethren, who have served the time mentioned: A. M. Wilhite, twelve years; W. G. Nunn, one year; G. E. Sandlin, ten years; H. B. Kimbrough, three years; W. B. Wilhite, three years; W. H. Junkins, the present clerk, nine years. In 1865, it does not appear from the church book that there were any business meetings.

It seems from the minutes of the association, that a church called Lebanon, in Morgan county, was received into the association, in 1847. Whether it was the same church as the present Lebanon, we are not able to say. In 1853, the present Lebanon Church was received as a new church. This church is located in a good neighborhood, and ought to be a stronger and more effective body than it is. It needs a new house of worship, and a little more life in its membership. It has some good members, and if they will all go to work with a will, they can accomplish much. The membership of this church in 1890 was sixty-eight.

BETHANY CHURCH.

This church is located in the northwestern part of Lawrence county. It joined the association in 1876. J. Nichols, A. J. Stephens and W. Morris were the delegates. Number of members, twelve. Elder W. A. Agee was its first pastor. W. C. Summers succeeded him in 1880 and continued until 1886; then L. P. Craig. In 1887-8, J. M. Roberts was pastor. In 1889, W. C. Summers. It was not represented in 1890. Do not know its deacons or clerks.

BLUE SPRINGS CHURCH.

This church is located in Morgan county, ten miles east from Somerville. It joined the association in 1873. There seems to have been another Blue Springs Church, which was dismissed from the association in 1859, and which we find as a church of the association in 1853, with J. Weaver, E. Oden, as delegates, and M. A. Verser, as pastor. Whether it was located at or near the same place where the present Blue Springs Church is, we are not able to say. It may have joined Warrior River Association and during the war dissolved, which we think quite likely. The church, now belonging to the association, joined in 1873, as a new church. Elder R. A. Windes was the pastor, and its membership twenty-nine. In 1874, Elder M. A. Verser was pastor, and continued several years. J. M. Simpson followed him, and then S. R. C. Adams in 1881. In 1882-3, John E. Weaver was pastor. Elder Adams again became pastor in 1884. In 1885, Elder J. E. Weaver took charge of the church and has been pastor ever since. The number of members reported in 1890 was 106. W. J. Weaver is clerk. This church seems to be in a prosperous condition. It con-

tributes to missions and education. It is in the midst of a prosperous neighborhood. A number of the members of Shilo Church, when it dissolved, became members of Blue Spring. It occupies a part of the territory of old Shilo and Salem Churches.

HARMONY CHURCH.

This church is located five miles from Moulton, on the road from Moulton to Hillsboro. It joined the association in 1874. J. P. Bragg, C. W. Pitt and T. R. Bragg were the delegates, and J. M. Roberts was pastor; membership, forty-one. In 1876, Elder T. R. Bragg was pastor. He was ordained in this church. In 1879, J. M. Roberts was pastor. He was succeeded by J. R. Nesmith, in 1880. Elder Mat. Lyon served the church in 1882, and J. I. Stockton in 1883; J. M. Roberts from 1884 to 1887. T. R. Bragg became pastor in 1888 and served until 1890. Elder J. M. Roberts is the present pastor, J. S. Howell is the clerk; membership, fifty-seven.

This church has no house of worship of its own. It worships in a union house. It has not made much progress. It has kept up neither Sunday School nor prayer meeting. We have not been able to get any records from this church, therefore cannot tell who its deacons are, or have been.

MT. ZION CHURCH, LAWRENCE COUNTY.

This church was admitted into the association in 1853. It then had twenty-seven members, and Elder R. J. Jennings was its pastor. The church is located in the north-western part of the county, about fifteen miles from Moulton. Before the war Elders George Little and J. R. Cagle seem to have been its pastors, after Jennings. No mention is made of it in the minutes from 1859 until 1871,

when it was represented in the association by M. H. Golden, Isaiah Roden and Wm. Stanley. Elder J. R. Nesmith was its pastor and continued until 1880. Its membership was fifty-two. Whether it had been dissolved previous to this, and was reorganized is not stated, but we presume that it was reorganized. The church seems to have prospered during the pastorate of Brother Nesmith.

In 1880, Elders W. C. Summers became pastor and continued until 1883. Elder W. A. Agee succeeded him and served one year. He was followed by Elder Summers who served two years. In 1886 and 1887, no pastor reported. In 1888, Elder J. R. Nesmith was pastor and is its pastor now. It was represented in 1890 by Brother J. E. Campbell. Membership, forty-eight.

A few years ago this church was disturbed by an element in it that held to the views of open communion Baptists. Some of its members joined the Free-will Baptists who had organized a church in the neighborhood. This weakened the church, and for a while it seemed as if the church would go down. The few members who were faithful, rallied and through the instrumentality of Elder Nesmith, it commenced keeping house again. We trust it may prosper. Its clerk is T. R. Beaver.

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH.

This church is situated five or six miles south of Moulton, in Lawrence county. It was received into the association in 1856. J. R. Cagle, W. Ireland and James Johnson were the delegates. There were nineteen members. Elder J. R. Cagle was the pastor, and continued until 1858. In 1859-60, J. P. Craig was pastor; in 1861, Wm. Spain, who continued through 1862; in 1865, Elder J. D. Man was pastor. In 1868, Wm. Spain; in 1869, Wm. Hightower; in 1870-71, J. L. Lattimore served the

church. J. P. Bragg became pastor in 1872. He served perhaps several years, as he was pastor in 1876. Its membership was then seventy-one. It does not appear from the minutes that it was represented in the association again until 1883, when W. G. Waldrop and J. W. Roberts were the delegates, and J. C. Roberts was the pastor. The membership had dwindled down to twenty. If it had any pastor during all that time, six years, we are not informed. We suppose that there was preaching occasionally, though no regular pastor, or it certainly would have been represented in the association. J. C. Roberts continued pastor until 1885, when J. M. Roberts was pastor. There was no representation in 1886 and 1887. In 1888, J. P. Bragg, who had returned from Texas, became the pastor and has continued until the present. The membership in 1890 was sixty-one. The church had a good meeting in 1890, and reported fifteen baptized. Rush Stockton is the clerk; who the deacons are, we are not informed.

NEW FRIENDSHIP CHURCH.

This church is situated rather between Somerville and the Tennessee river, four or five miles from Somerville. It was received into the association in 1875, with sixteen members. W. M. Duncan was its first pastor. Brothers W. C. Wright, J. A. L. Berry and W. M. Shelton were the delegates. In 1876, it had eighty-one members, forty-five received by baptism. The pastors of this church have been, after Duncan, W. B. Carter, F. M. Yeager, H. J. Halbrooks, T. J. Weaver, W. E. Wright and J. E. Roan, who is its present pastor. The membership in 1890 was forty-seven. Brothers W. E. and J. S. Wright are ordained ministers belonging to this church; J. S. Wright is its clerk. The church appears to have been in

a declining state for several years. Our missionaries usually preach to it.

THARP'S SPRING CHURCH.

This church is situated in Colbert county, near the Franklin line, about five miles northeast from Russellville. The first church organized under this name was received into the association in 1847. It went down however. In 1883, another church of the same name, at the same place, was organized and received into the association. The pastors of the first organization, so far as the minutes of the association show, were R. J. Jennings, T. S. Carson and J. Sherrell. In 1883, its membership was eleven, and its pastor was E. R. Little. John Askew represented it in the association that year. This church, it seems, went down as it did not represent itself in the association again. In 1887, through the influence of Elder M. Finney, it was reorganized and was received into the association again. It was represented by Brothers Mike Taylor, H. C. Counts and T. J. Byars. Elder Finney was its pastor. Its membership was forty-nine. In 1888, Elder J. O. A. Pace was its pastor. In 1889 and 1890, Elder F. M. Little was its pastor. Its membership in 1890 was about fifty. G. W. Stout was the clerk; its deacons, not known.

MISSION GROVE CHURCH.

This little church is located near the Tennessee river, in Lawrence county, about ten miles north of Courtland. It was organized in 1874, by one of the missionaries of the association, Brother R. A. Windes, I believe. It joined the association the same year. It had only twelve members. It has never had many more than this. It has been a missionary station almost ever since its or-

ganization. Elder S. M. Steenson preached to it from 1875 to 1880. Since that time, our missionaries have supplied it, namely, Elders Stockton, Speer and Huckabee. In 1880, its membership was twenty-one; in 1890, only thirteen.

The population is not a settled one. It is composed to a great extent of renters, hence we cannot expect to build up a strong church here, until there is a more permanent population. Brother John Yates is the clerk.

HARTSELL CHURCH.

This church is located in the growing town of Hartsell, Morgan county, which is fourteen miles south of Decatur, on the Louisville & Nashville railroad. It was organized in 1883, with nine members, by Elders Josephus Shackelford and W. B. Carter, as the presbytery. The church joined the association the same year. Elder W. B. Carter was its first pastor, and served the church until 1888. He was succeeded by Elder J. Gunn, who was pastor in 1888. Elder H. G. Halbrooks succeeded him, and is the present pastor. The clerk is Brother D. A. Burleson. Elder J. D. McClanahan, and until recently, Elder J. I. Stockton, held their membership with this church. Its present membership is forty-six. It has a good Sabbath School, with Brother D. W. Day, superintendent. This church has built a good comfortable house of worship, and seems to be in a prosperous state. It has in it some excellent members, who are good workers. It is also liberal in its contributions to missions and other benevolent objects. Hartsell is improving. Its business is good, and it bids fair to be a much larger town than it is. The Baptists should keep up with the growth of the town.

DANVILLE CHURCH.

This church is situated in the beautiful little village of Danville, which is in the western part of Morgan county, and about nine miles west of Hartsell. We know of no little town that has a better character for the morality and intelligence of its citizens than Danville. Nearly all of its citizens are members of some church. A fine school is located here under the charge of Prof. J. C. Tidwell, a most excellent teacher. There are two churches in the place, Baptist and Methodist. Both have good houses of worship, and both have good Sunday Schools. The Baptist church was organized in 1884, with about twelve members. The proximity of other churches to Danville has kept this church from growing very rapidly. Hope-well is about two and one-half miles from it, Enon about five miles, and Friendship about the same distance. The first pastor of this church was Elder S. R. C. Adams, who was a resident of Danville at that time. He remained pastor until November, 1886, when Elder W. T. Cobbs was called to the care of the church. He is its present pastor. He lives in Danville and has his membership in this church. The association was held with this church in 1889. It was well entertained by the hospitable people of Danville and vicinity. Elder E. D. Stephenson has his membership in this church. He is practicing medicine and preaches occasionally. The number of members in 1890 was sixty-seven. J. W. Hargrove is the clerk. Two deacons were ordained in this church in November, 1890, Brother J. C. Tidwell and Dr. N. A. Barret. This is an active and working body. It has a number of young members, both male and female, who are active workers. They finished building them a handsome and neat house of worship, in 1890. Much praise

is due Miss Glen Orr, the daughter of our Brother and Sister Jonathan Orr, for the active effort she made to secure money to build the house. The contributions of this church are liberal. Dr. N. A. Barret is the efficient superintendent of the Sunday School.

The following were the constituent members of this church: Mrs. N. C. Adams, Mrs. Carrie L. Simpson, Mrs. M. F. Blackwell, Mary Frazier, Miss Glen L. Orr, Nettie Orr, Elder S. R. C. Adams, Stephen Simpson, W. R. Frazier, Jno. M. Kirby and James W. Hargrove.

Brothers W. R. Frazier and Sam'l Nunn were the first deacons. They were succeeded by Brothers H. B. Kimbrough and S. W. Orr. Two others have been elected since, as given above.

MT. HOPE CHURCH.

This church is in the village of Mt. Hope, Lawrence county. It was organized in 1887, August 27, principally from members of Town Creek Church. W. R. Roberts, J. F. Harville, and A. C. Messer were the delegates to the association in 1887. The following were the constituent members: P. W. McVay, John J. Dukeminier, Lizzie Dukeminier, A. C. Messer, Nannie Messer, Bennie Messer, L. M. Whitman, Marganna Whitman, Jennie Messer, Martha McVay. Elder R. T. Wear, who organized the church, was chosen pastor and has remained the pastor ever since. George W. Jackson is clerk. Elder J. S. Gibson has his membership with this church. The number of members in 1890 was twenty-six. Total contributions, twenty-six dollars. This church is liberal considering its membership. It is situated in a quiet village, surrounded by a church-going community. Other Baptist churches in the neighborhood may prevent it growing

rapidly. The church needs a house of worship of its own.

FALKVILLE CHURCH.

This church is in the little town of Falkville, Morgan county, which is five miles south of Hartsell, on the L. & N. R. R. It was constituted in the year 1887 and represented itself in the association that year. Brothers T. L. Simpson and J. M. McDaniel were the delegates. It was constituted on eleven members. Elder T. J. Weaver was its first pastor and it was through him that the church was constituted, he being the missionary of the association at the time, and having Falkville as one of his preaching places. He was succeeded by Elder John E. Weaver who is the present pastor. The association was held with this church in 1890, and was well taken care of by the church and community. The church has built a good, comfortable house of worship. Its membership is thirty-one. T. L. Simpson is clerk. This church was aided some by the association, but is now able to take care of itself.

ETHA CHURCH.

This church is situated in Cullman county, near the Morgan line. It joined the association in 1883, at its session at Enon. Brother J. P. Scruggs was the delegate. The membership was ten. Elder T. J. Weaver was the first pastor, who has remained its pastor up to the present, 1890. Its membership in 1890 was fifty-three. J. B. Kellar is the clerk. J. P. Scruggs is a licensed minister in the church. Its greatest increase was in 1889, when it reported eleven baptisms and twelve received by letter. It has generally contributed something to missions and education every year. J. P. Scruggs seemed to be one of its working

members. He with Brothers R. F. Minter and Kellar generally attend the association.

ZION CHURCH,

Located near Mountain Home, in Lawrence county, joined the association in 1884, with twenty-two members. Elder Wm. Spain has been its pastor all the time, and it was organized through his influence, and by him. Its membership in 1890 was thirty-one. Henry Hawkins is the clerk.

MT. STANLEY CHURCH.

This church is situated about five miles northwest of Town Creek, in Lawrence county. It was organized in 1887 and joined the association the same year. We think it was organized by Elders W. B. Carter and John Speer, who were doing mission work in the Valley that year. It is a small body and has been assisted by the association nearly all the time since its organization. It was constituted on eight members. Dr. Wm. Stanley and Brother G. W. Dodson were among the constituent members. Elders W. B. Carter, John Speer and J. B. Huckabee have supplied it with preaching as missionaries of the association. Its membership in 1890 was sixteen, which has been a very slow growth. This little church has built a very good house of worship. The great difficulty with this church, as it is with many of the churches in the Tennessee Valley, and has been for years, is that the population is rather a floating one. Many of the people are renters and do not remain in one place long. It is surrounded by large plantations worked principally by negro labor. The white people are scarce. It is hard to keep up a church under such circumstances.

SOMERVILLE CHURCH.

This church, located at the county seat of Morgan county, was organized in 1887, through the influence of Elder T. J. Weaver, who was the missionary of the association. This was one of his preaching places. The Presbyterians who had a good house of worship in Somerville offered the Baptists the use of it, if they would repair it, it being somewhat out of repair. The Baptists agreed to it, and they now have a good and comfortable house of worship. It joined the association in 1887, Elder T. J. Weaver being its delegate. It had twenty eight members. Elder Weaver was its first pastor. Elder John M. Simpson succeeded him in 1888, and Elder J. I. Stockton succeeded him, and was pastor for 1889 and 1890. J. C. Herring is the clerk. He is also a minister. Its membership now is thirty. Elder John M. Simpson has his membership in this church. This church occupies an important position and ought to grow. It is strange that in a county, where the Baptists have considerable strength, and have had ever since the county was first settled by the whites, that the county-seat, a town seventy years old or more, should not have a Baptist Church in it until three years ago.

SHEFFIELD CHURCH.

This church is located in one of the growing towns of north Alabama. When Sheffield was first laid off by the Sheffield Land Company, eligible lots were set aside for church lots for the different denominations, which the company offered to give, if church houses were built upon them. The Baptists were slow to organize and avail themselves of the offer. In 1887, Elder J. M. Thomas was sent to Sheffield by the State mission

board. He soon organized a church with fifteen members. The church proceeded to build, and have erected a small and comfortable church house. It was not represented in the association in 1888 and 1889. In 1890, Elder J. I. Ayers, its pastor, represented it. Its membership, as then reported, was eighty-five. Dr. T. J. Morris was clerk. It reported, a Sabbath School with fifteen officers and teachers, and ninety-eight pupils, A. J. Ivey, superintendent. It now has no pastor, Elder Ayers having resigned. Sheffield has about 2000 population. It is situated on the south side of the Tennessee river, a few miles below Florence, and two miles from Tuscumbia. Its prospects for being a large city are good. It has four or five iron furnaces and other industries. The Baptists should strive earnestly to increase their strength in this place.

FURNACE HILL CHURCH.

This is a new church, organized in April, 1890, through the labors of Brother O. E. Comstock. It is situated in Sheffield, near the furnaces, hence its name. The membership reported was twelve. Elder Comstock is the pastor. He was ordained soon after the organization of the church, by a presbytery consisting of Elders W. H. Smith, J. I. Ayers and J. E. Herring. Elders Mat. Lyon and J. E. Herring constituted the church. The church has no house of worship, but is taking steps to build one.

VALHERMOSA SPRINGS CHURCH.

This church is situated near Valhermosa Springs, Morgan county, and was organized by Elder T. J. Weaver, missionary, in 1889, and represented itself in the association that year, at its session in Danville. Its delegates were, Brothers W. C. Hardage, John White and

G. W. Free. T. J. Weaver is its pastor, and W. C. Hardage its clerk. Its membership is forty-four.

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH.

This church is in Lawrence county, near Landersville. It was organized in 1889, from members principally of Town Creek Church. It represented itself in the association that year. It had then twenty-three members. Elder J. M. Roberts was chosen pastor and is still serving in that capacity. His membership is with that church. Brother Jonathan Sandlin is one of the deacons. He was a deacon in Town Creek Church. W. H. Sandlin is the clerk. The membership reported in 1890 was sixty-three. The church also reports a Sunday School with twenty-five pupils, three officers and teachers, and a weekly prayer meeting. It seems to be a live church, and bids fair to prosper.

SHADY GROVE CHURCH.

This is another new church, organized by Elder W. D. McClanahan, missionary, with fifteen members. It was organized in October, 1889, and joined the association the same year. Elders W. T. Cobbs, E. D. Stephenson, constituted the presbytery that organized the church. Elder W. D. McClanahan is the missionary pastor; Thomas Prater, deacon, and Woodie Brown, clerk. This church is to build a house near what is called Poteet's School House.

CAVE SPRING CHURCH

Was organized November 10, 1889, and joined the association in 1890, with seventeen members. The presbytery that organized the church consisted of Elders T. J. Weaver, John M. Simpson. Elder J. D. McClanahan is

the missionary pastor and Brother J. R. Collier, clerk.

This church is situated in Morgan county, near Priceville. It is to be hoped that these missionary churches, that is, churches organized by our missionaries, will soon gather strength enough to stand by themselves.

We have finished our sketches of the churches, we regret, that in some instances, we have so little to say. This is because of the carelessness of clerks to give us the information sought. We have done the best we could, under the circumstances. We have preserved some facts for future historians.

Biographical Sketches

OF THE MINISTERS CONNECTED WITH THE MUSCLE
SHOALS BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

To the Reader:

IN preparing the following sketches, the author has availed himself of such information as he was able to procure. In many instances, he was confined to the minutes of the association. In some he has been assisted by friends, who were personally acquainted with the parties, and could give reliable information. His desire has been to preserve the memory of the sainted dead who lived and labored in this association years ago.

After preparing the sketches of those ministers who have died, it occurred to the author that it would be well in a book of this character also to give some brief sketches of the ministers now living, who have been, and are still, identified with the work of the association. He has done this as far as he was able. Some may be omitted, because he has not been able to secure the material necessary to give a correct sketch of their lives, his request for facts not being attended to in time. These sketches are given, that the lives of good men who have lived and labored for the good of others may not be forgotten, and that many of our young men may be inspired by their works to consecrate their lives to the cause of Christ.

THE AUTHOR.

ELDER JOHN DAVIS.

Elder Davis was a native of Virginia, and moved to Georgia in early life, and there professed the religion of Jesus, and was shortly after ordained a minister. He preached many years in that State, and then moved with his family to Franklin county, Tennessee, and from thence, in 1816, to Russell Valley, Franklin county, Alabama. He was the agent in the hands of God, by which the Russell Valley Church was constituted. With what care he nursed it, there are many living witnesses, and it was his constant effort to gather the Baptists everywhere in reach, in this then unsettled country, and form churches, until the number was sufficiently large to form an association; and principally through his agency, the Muscle Shoals Association was formed, he getting the churches to send a petition to the Flint River Association for a presbytery of which he was the bearer; which presbytery convened at Russell Valley Church, with the messengers from the different churches, on Friday before the third Lord's Day, in July, 1820, and organized the association.

As a minister, Elder Davis was laborious. His mode of preaching was plain and pathetic. Experimental religion was the theme on which he mostly dwelt, and whatever his subject might be, he preached it in some part of his discourse. He was Calvinistic in his doctrine, and however much he might warn sinners, he gave God all the glory for the graces of repentance, conviction, conversion and regeneration. Electing grace was to him a never ending theme. He seemed never to forget God's merciful dealings with him, in His awakening of him from the sleep of sin, and in His carrying him on, till He taught him the plan of salvation, through Jesus

Christ. It was with him all electing grace, and on this he ever dwelt. Elder Davis was a man of strong natural mind, without much literary culture, but strong in thought and clear in perception. He disregarded the beauty of language, and was downright and straight-forward in his preaching, and gave himself the name of "Flat-footed John Davis." His preaching was plain and forcible. The amount of his usefulness will never be known nor correctly appreciated in time. General Reuben Davis, a distinguished lawyer of Mississippi, formerly a member of the confederate congress and a general in the confederate army, was the son of Elder Davis. In his book recently published, giving a history of his own life, and reminiscences of the public men and times of Mississippi, he thus speaks of his father: "My father was one of the earliest settlers in this country (Russell Valley, Alabama). He was a man of limited means, and though of a strong and vigorous intellect, had only the imperfect education of the pioneers of that day. His chief study was the Bible, and a few volumes of history, which formed his only library. Although a Baptist minister of high standing, he occupied himself during the week with ordinary farm labor, and could never be induced to accept any compensation for his services in the church. This would have been according to his belief, 'serving the Lord for hire.'"

Again, he says: "It was clear to him that lawyers were wholly given up to the devil even in this world, and that it was impossible for any one of them ever to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. He entertained a strong doubt as to the final welfare of medical men in general, but admitted that some few of them might be saved, provided they used their best endeavors not to kill their patients." General Davis, who thus speaks of his father's opinions

concerning lawyers and doctors, was both a lawyer and a doctor. He practiced medicine first, and then became disgusted with it and practiced law, and by the way was a very successful lawyer. Elder Davis was pastor of Russell Valley Church fourteen years. He was moderator of the association twice. He died at his residence in Franklin county, Alabama, on the 9th of October, 1831, aged between seventy and eighty years.

ELDER JOHN L. TOWNES

Was born in Amelia county, Virginia, November 15, 1774. He was educated at Hampden-Sidney College, Prince Edward county, and finished his law studies with Judge Peter Johnson, and was admitted to the bar in Amelia county, in 1806. On the 24th of December, 1806, he was married to Miss Polly S. Eggleston. On the commencement of the war of 1812, between the United States and Great Britain, he, as captain, commanded a volunteer company, and served out the war in that capacity, stationed principally at Norfolk, Virginia. At the close of the war, in 1815, he received a commission as major of the first battalion, First Regiment of Virginia Militia, from the executive of Virginia, in which capacity he acted during his residence in Virginia. In 1815, he was elected to the legislature of Virginia, and served with some distinction through the session of 1815 and 1816. In the summer of 1817, he joined the United Baptist Church of Christ, at Sandy Creek, Amelia county, and was baptized by Rev. John Skurry, then pastor of that church, his wife having been baptized several years before, by the Rev. Richard Dabbs. In October, 1817, he moved with his family from Virginia, and settled in Madison county, Alabama, then Mississippi territory. After the formation of Alabama Territory, he was elected from Madison

county to the convention that formed the State constitution. In 1820, he moved into Lawrence county and settled on Town Creek, when he became a member of Carmel Church, and was in the formation of what was originally called "The Big Bend of Tennessee River Association," which was afterwards called "The Muscle Shoals Association." In 1824, he was regularly ordained in Carmel Church a minister of the gospel, by a presbytery consisting of Elders Henry W. Hodges, Jeremiah Burns and Wm. Leigh. He was a faithful minister, always engaged in the discharge of his Christian and ministerial duties. At times he supplied as many as three or four churches with the preached word. He was clerk of the association for nine sessions and moderator for two sessions. He was pastor of the Courtland, Russell Valley, Bethel and other churches, for several years. At the time of his death, which occurred July 28, 1846, he was pastor of Mt. Pleasant and Bethel Churches. He was always a zealous friend of the missionary cause, though opposed by many of his brethren. He was a minister that was beloved by all who knew him, persuasive in his manner, reaching the feelings of others by showing that he himself felt. He was a good writer and wrote several circular letters which evinced thought and research. He died in the triumphs of faith. Chancellor Eggleston D. Townes, formerly of Tuscumbia, was a son of Elder Townes.

JEREMIAH BURNS.

Among the early ministers in north Alabama was Elder Jeremiah Burns. His name appears as one of the committee to draft a constitution at the organization of the Muscle Shoals Association, at Russell Valley Church, in July, 1820. At the next session he was elected moder-

ator, and again in 1824 and was continued as moderator until 1830, when he declined serving. He was moderator again in 1831. After that we find no mention of his name in the minutes. We suppose he left the State. We are indebted to "Borum's Sketches of Tennessee Baptist Ministers," for the following which is from his son, Wm. M. Burns, of Texas :

"Elder Burns was born in South Carolina, October 19, 1779, and died near Germantown, Tennessee, January, 1861. He was baptized by Rev. Thomas Green, June, 1802, in South Carolina. He was married four times. His first wife was Lavina Jackson, to whom he was married in South Carolina. She died in Franklin county, Tennessee, in 1816. His second wife was a Miss Francis Lloyd, who died in Florence, Alabama. His third wife was a Mrs. Maria Saxton, a widow lady of Franklin county, Alabama. His last wife was Mrs. Nancy Watkins, whom he left a widow. He left north Alabama in 1831, and went to Fayette county, Tennessee." This must have been after the association met, as he was moderator that year. His son says on page ninety-six of Borum's Sketches, that "About the year 1822, the Muscle Shoals Association split on the missionary question, and that the missionary party employed Elders Burns and Josiah Barker to ride for them in the counties around them. They were the first acting missionary Baptist preachers that I ever saw, and I can only say of their labors, within that period, that I do not remember to have visited a new settlement or congregation in the southwest, without meeting someone, who could tell me of their conviction, conversion, or enjoyment in some way of their labors about that time."

There is a mistake about the association splitting on or about 1822. There was a difference of opinion in the

association on the subject of missionary effort, but there was no split at this time, it occurred at a later date, as the history of the association will show. In 1823, the association did have four missionaries employed, but at the next meeting they were discontinued. Elder Barker was one of those missionaries, but Elder Burns was not. He may have traveled voluntarily, as he was an enthusiastic missionary. Elder Burns was an earnest worker and a good preacher. His opportunities for securing an education were limited. He learned English Grammar in connection with the study of the Bible, in middle Tennessee, after a hard day's work, by the light of old cedar brush. He was then a man grown. He labored in the ministry fifty-nine years. At the time of his death he was pastor of Germantown Baptist Church, Shelby county, Tennessee. The first Baptist education society in Tennessee was founded July 26, 1835. Elder Burns was one of the managers. He was moderator of Big Hatchie Association in 1859. The writer remembers meeting with Elder Burns, in 1855, in west Tennessee. He was a venerable looking man, possessing a fine voice and attractive address. He was very agreeable in conversation. He was able in the Scriptures. He did a good work in north Alabama, the few years he was here, as has been testified to by many of the brethren whom the writer met, when he first came into the Muscle Shoals Association. He was considered one of the ablest of the ministers in the association in its earliest days.

ELDER WM. LEIGH.

Elder Wm. Leigh was born in Amelia county, Virginia, October 4, 1790, and died at his residence in Florence, Alabama, July 31, 1873, aged eighty-two years, nine months and twenty-seven days. Elder Leigh was a

useful man in his day and generation. In early youth he consecrated himself to the service of God. We find that in his seventeenth year, he was a member of Sandy Creek Baptist Church, Amelia county, Virginia. Young as he was, he presided as moderator over the church. He must have become a member some time before this (1807). August 5, 1810, in his twentieth year, he was licensed to preach the gospel, and on April 7, 1821, he was called to ordination by the church. On June 16, 1821, he was ordained to the gospel ministry by a presbytery, consisting of Elders Edward Baptist, Edmund Good and Thomas Pettus. He was a minister for sixty-three years, and an ordained minister for fifty-two years.

At the meeting of the Muscle Shoals Association in 1823, Elder Leigh, who had but recently moved to Alabama, attended and proposed that the association advise the churches to take into consideration the subject of missions within the bounds of the association. His proposition was rejected by the churches, though the association that year appointed four missionaries. At the next association the churches in their letters expressed their disapprobation of the act. Elder Leigh did not cease his efforts here, to infuse a missionary spirit among the Baptists of north Alabama. Through his influence a missionary society was organized in Carmel Church, of which he was a member, in June, 1824. This society met with much opposition even up to 1846, when the association by its action became a missionary body. He advocated and secured the organization of a missionary society, which met at the same time and place of the association. Elder Leigh was an earnest advocate of missions, and constantly urged upon the churches in his preaching their duty to give the gospel to those who had it not. In all of his efforts he was aided by such minis-

ters as Burns, Henry W. Hodges, Bestor, Josiah Barker, John L. Townes, and by Brethren Amos Jarman, Thomas Ashford and Michael Mays, all of whom have passed away.

Much of the prosperity of the association in later years may be attributed to the missionary spirit which has possessed it, and Elder Leigh under God did much to produce this spirit, years ago. For fifty years he advocated this cause. He lived to see some results of his labors. He was clerk of the association in 1839. About the year 1849, he removed to Kentucky where he remained four years. He returned to Alabama in 1854, and resided in Moulton until the summer of 1856, when he removed to Florence, where he lived until his death. He had no charge of churches for several years previous to his death, but preached occasionally. His membership was with the Mount Pleasant Church, Lawrence county, Alabama. He was buried with masonic honors at the graveyard near Leighton, a small village on the M. & C. Railroad. This place takes its name from him. He originally owned the land. A church house and masonic lodge was built on the land (now in Leighton), given by him for the purpose. The provisions of the deed give the use of the house of worship to four denominations, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterians and Cumberland Presbyterians. Elder Leigh was an enthusiastic member of the Masonic Fraternity. He was grand master of the grand lodge of Alabama, in 1834. He was the author of a work on Masonry entitled, "The Ladies' Masonry or Hieroglyphic Monitor, containing all the emblems explained in the degrees of the Holy Virgin and Heroine of Jericho duly arranged." This he published in 1851. He was highly esteemed by his fellow citizens, who in 1840 called upon him to become a candidate for the legis-

lature, on the Whig ticket, for Franklin county, Alabama. He was defeated, however, as the Democratic party was in the majority in the county. He was twice married, but we have not been able to learn the names of his wives. His last one we knew. She was a most amiable and intelligent lady, and a member of the Presbyterian Church. She only survived him a few years. He had several children by his first wife, one daughter became the wife of Elder Richard B. Burleson, and died in Moulton. One married Mr. Ligon, son of Chancellor Ligon. Elder Leigh was an earnest, enthusiastic and good man. He was not a very able preacher, but a sound one.

ELDER HENRY W. HODGES.

We find the name of this brother prominently mentioned in the early minutes of the association. We learn from a brother who was well acquainted with him, that he came to Alabama about 1818 or 1819 and settled on Town Creek, near the bridge on the Tuscumbia and Courtland road. This was near the Carmel Church, of which he was a member, and perhaps a constituent member. He afterwards became a member of Mallard's Creek Church. In 1840, he was a delegate from Mallard's Creek Church. This is the last we hear of him in the minutes. He left Alabama about 1840 or 1841, for Georgia, as his friend states. How long he lived we are not able to say. He was then about sixty years old. In 1822, at the third session of the association, he preached the introductory sermon. Doubtless, he was at the organization of the association, as he was one of the presbytery that constituted Birdwell's Springs Church, now Enon, in June, 1819.

He was moderator in 1830 and in 1837. He seems to have been an active minister in his day and was pastor of

several churches, among which may be mentioned Spring Hill and Mallard's Creek. He had a wife and one child. Previous to leaving Alabama, he failed in business, having traded largely and being unable to breast the financial crash of eighteen thirty-six and seven.

ELDER JOSEPH LANE

Was another one of the early preachers of the association. He came from North Carolina and settled in Morgan county, Alabama, near where Trinity now stands, about 1820. He was a member of Spring Hill Church, near Decatur, and was ordained in that church by Elders J. L. Townes, Henry W. Hodges and Jeremiah Burns, in November, 1828. Elder James Edens, of Mt. Pisgah Church, was ordained at the same time and by the same presbytery. Elder Lane was pastor of Spring Hill Church for a while. He also preached to Enon and Hopewell Churches. He was pastor of Courtland Church in 1834. He left Alabama for Mississippi in 1836. He died in Mississippi, at what time we are not able to say. We have not been able to learn much of this brother, as most of those who knew him in Alabama have died or moved away.

ELDER THEOPHILOUS SKINNER

Was born in Kentucky and came from that State to Alabama, and settled in Russell Valley about 1817 or 1818. He was first member of Russell Valley Church, which he joined March 7, 1818, he and his wife Mary. He was called to ordination by that church and ordained in July, 1818, Elders John Davis and Abner Smith being the presbytery. Afterwards, when Mt. Nebo Church was constituted, he connected himself with that church. He

aided, as a minister, in constituting the following churches: Town Creek, in May, 1818; Hepzibah, in May, 1818; Carmel, in August, 1819; Bethel, in June, 1819, and was chosen pastor of the latter and served it until 1821. He also served Mt. Nebo, Hepzibah and Russell Valley Churches as pastor, and possibly others. We learn from a gentleman in Franklin county, who was well acquainted with Elder Skinner, that he was a great pastor, great in settling church difficulties—a peacemaker among his brethren. He was elected as a representative, and also as a senator to the legislature from Franklin county. This was an evidence of the high esteem in which he was held by his neighbors and the people generally. He is represented as being a good preacher for the times. His death was reported to the association at its session in 1845. We suppose he died that year, or during the latter part of 1844. He was one of the founders of the association.

ELDER ABNER SMITH

Is another of the old ministers of the association of whom we know very little, being unable to procure any information except that we gather from the minutes of the association and of some of the churches. He joined Russell Valley Church in January, 1818. He was then a minister. Whence he came we do not know. He lived, we presume, from his membership, in Russell Valley. He was the first pastor of Town Creek Church. He was moderator of the association in 1832 and in 1833. What became of him after this we have no knowledge.

ELDER SOLOMON SMITH

Was one of the presbytery that constituted Bethel Church, in 1819. He was the supply to the Hepzibah Church when first constituted. We hear nothing more

of him through the minutes of the association. It is probable that he moved from the State.

ELDER JOHN LEIGH

Was among the early settlers of north Alabama, coming from Virginia. Some of his descendants live in Lawrence county now. A son of his, we believe, is a representative in the legislature from Lawrence county. Elder John R. Nesmith married his granddaughter, Miss Permelia G. Leigh, daughter of David G. Leigh. Elder Leigh settled in the neighborhood of Moulton and Salem Church, what year we cannot say. The first record we have of his name in the association is in 1840, when he preached the introductory sermon. We know, however, that he was here before that, for he was called to the pastoral care of Mt. Pisgah Church, in 1837. He remained pastor of this church until 1841. He was a member of Salem Church at that time. Whether Brother Leigh went off with the anti-missionary party or died before the division occurred, we do not know. The minutes of the association give no information.

ELDER DANIEL PERRINE BESTOR, D. D.

This brother was connected with the Muscle Shoals Association only a few years, in its early history. He, however, was one of the early preachers of north Alabama, and a man of pre-eminent ability. We desire, therefore, to make some permanent record of his life. We gather most of the facts concerning the life of Brother Bestor from a sketch published in the *Alabama Baptist*, by Elder Samuel Henderson several years ago, and from his son, Hon. D. P. Bestor, of Mobile, Alabama.

Elder Daniel Perrine Bestor was born in Suffield, Connecticut, February, 1797. He went to Lexington, Ken-

tucky, when a boy, and studied law. Under the influence of the preaching of the celebrated Dr. Fishback, he was converted at Lexington, and joined the church and commenced preaching, being only twenty-two years old. He came to north Alabama about two years after this and settled at Athens. In 1826, he married Miss Eliza J. Townes, the daughter of Elder John L. Townes. He lived at La Grange, Alabama, several years, and was at the head of a school at that place, and preached to several churches. He was one of the presbytery that constituted Courtland Church, May 5, 1827, and became pastor of that church and continued six years. In 1829, he preached the introductory sermon at the tenth session of the association. About the year 1833, he removed to Greensboro, Alabama, where he established a female school, which became one of the most popular schools in the State. He resided in Greensboro thirteen years. In 1846, he removed to Sumpter county, where he devoted himself to farming and preaching for ten years. In 1856, he removed his property to Mississippi and settled a plantation there, which he kept up until the war closed, but he resided in Mobile until the war broke out, when he retired to his farm and gave it his personal supervision. He took charge of the Baptist Church at Columbus, Mississippi, on the restoration of peace, which charge he held until his death, which occurred at Mobile, Alabama, April 9, 1869. His first wife died in 1852, leaving six children, three daughters and three sons. Two of these sons were killed in battle during the war, the other is a prominent lawyer living in Mobile, Alabama, D. P. Bestor, Esq. Two of the daughters are dead, the other, Mrs. Anna B. Brown, wife of Col. J. C. Brown, is living at East Lake, Alabama. Dr. Bestor's second wife was a Mrs. Bledsoe, of Columbus, Mississippi, daughter of Maj.

Thos. G. Blewett, a prominent and influential Baptist of that city. She died in 1885. Dr. Bestor was pastor of the following churches: Athens, Courtland, La Grange, Greensboro, Spring Hill, Gainsville, Sumpterville, Livingstone, and Mobile, in Alabama, Columbus, in Mississippi. His ministerial labors were arduous and abundant, and were almost always without remuneration. He was in independent circumstances, and the churches in those days, country ones especially, were not in the habit of paying their preachers much, hence he was not remunerated though he at times very decidedly enforced the duty of churches supporting their pastors. Perhaps, if he had demanded this for himself, as well as teaching it by precept, his exhortations in this direction might have been more effective.

Dr. Bestor was a member of the Alabama legislature, and also of the Mississippi legislature. While in the legislature of Alabama, he was a strong advocate of education, and distinguished himself for the high stand he took upon the subject of popular education. He was a member of the board of trustees of the State University for many years, which brought him into most intimate relations with Dr. Manly, the president of the University. He was always a firm friend of that institution. He was very highly esteemed for his scholarly attainments and pulpit power, and was frequently elected to the presidencies of colleges and high schools, and called to the pastorates of churches in the north, all of which he declined, preferring to remain where he was. We have followed Dr. Henderson principally in the above sketch. We now give the following, extracted from the sketch alluded to above:

“In 1846, he removed to Sumpter county, where he devoted his attention to farming and preaching for ten

years. This was the period of his greatest usefulness. And I may as well add just here, that with all those abilities that gave him such a breadth of influence in the State, and that made him the charm of every circle, he possessed that balance of mind we call common sense, to that degree that made him a model in all the practicalities of life. He always maintained that the judgment, skill, industry and economy which a minister displayed in managing his private affairs were a fair criterion by which to judge of his usefulness and success as a pastor. If he failed at home, he would fail elsewhere. While he believed as sincerely as any man that pastors ought to be supported by their churches, he always maintained that no obligations could ever be imposed by God or man upon any minister that would release him from the vows of the marriage altar, where he assumed the responsibilities of head of the family, and that to impoverish his family to preach to churches that would not pay, was a crime against humanity. In his estimation, the sublimest ministerial consecration is found in our country churches when godly, zealous men worked six days in the week on their farms for the privilege of preaching on the seventh. For such men he always had a warm place in his heart, and an earnest 'God bless you' in his greeting. Some of the most eloquent and touching tributes I ever heard from his lips were paid to these men."

As a preacher, Dr. Bestor would have ranked high in any country. In his palmy days, and in his particular line of talent, certainly I never knew him surpassed. Other men excelled him in profundity and mental grasp, and perhaps in that intense application of truth to a congregation, which produces immediate results; for in the early part of his ministry, the period when such habits are formed as develop a man's highest capac-

ities, his time was divided between the ministry and other callings.

As a preacher, I only wish I could paint him as he was thirty and forty years ago, in the flower of his manhood. In the matter of his sermons, he was always fresh, entertaining, never commonplace, always holding a congregation in rapt attention to the close. I once heard him preach two hours utterly unconscious of the flight of time. The interest of his sermons seldom flagged from the beginning to the end. His discourses had one peculiarity which is not met with once in a thousand cases—there was well nigh a total absence of all the ordinary terminology with which orthodox sermons are expected to abound.

He wielded his native tongue like a magician. He never hesitated for the right word. In his expressional power, he was unsurpassed by any man I ever knew. Eschewing all the old forms of expressing evangelical doctrines which use had canonized, he coined a vernacular of his own, which for clearness of conception, richness of diction, and sharpness of definition, was really refreshing and enchanting. His imagination was always the servant of his reason, and it never ran wild after vagaries. It was cultivated, refined, and chaste, so that under its inspiration, his thoughts would often effloresce into forms of beauty entrancing to a degree.

The last time I met him was but two years before his death, at the Southern Baptist Convention at Memphis, Tennessee. He had begun to show the traces of age, but there was the same elastic step, the same clear, ringing voice, slightly shattered, and the same warm, generous heart. We parted in tears, to meet next time, I hope, in our Heavenly Father's House!

He was stricken with paralysis, while preaching to his

charge in Columbus, Mississippi, was carried to Mobile, where he lingered a short time, and died on the 9th of April, 1869, between three and four months after his old friend Dr. Manly died.

ELDER JOSIAH BARKER.

This brother was one of the pioneer preachers in north Alabama. He was a North Carolinian by birth. He moved to Alabama in 1819 or 1820. He was first a member of Bethel Church and afterwards became a member of the West Fork of Town Creek Church. Where he was ordained, or whether he was a preacher when he first came to Alabama, we have not been able to find out. He was a missionary for the association in 1823. He seems to have traveled about a good deal as a missionary. He became pastor of Bethel Church in 1823, and continued until 1829. He was also pastor of Liberty Church. He and Elder Jeremiah Burns constituted that church about 1830 and he afterwards became its pastor. He also preached some at Hopewell Church. Elder Barker was called to Bethel Church again about 1835 and served until 1841. His death was reported to the association in 1842. He seems to have been an active, energetic minister of the gospel. He lived somewhere near Russell's graveyard, which is not far from Newburg. He was buried there.

ELDER RUFUS C. BURLESON, D.D., L.L.D.,

The son of Deacon Jonathan Burleson, deceased, was born near Decatur, Alabama, August 7, 1823. His father was one of the early settlers in North Alabama, then called Mississippi Territory. He was a member of Mt. Pisgah Church, Morgan county, and one of its deacons for a number of years. He was a thrifty farmer, and

amassed during his life a moderate fortune. He reared a large family of children, who have done well in the world, and have maintained a high character for their morality and intelligence. Most, if not all of them, have been consistent members of the Baptist Church. Deacon Burleson was a good Christian man, exemplary in his walk, and teaching his children how to live, by his own life of practical godliness. The children might well be thankful that they had such a father. The father, doubtless, was thankful that his children had done so well in the world, and that they were Christian men and women, for he lived to see most of them grown and settled in life.

Dr. Rufus Burleson was converted in a meeting held at Mt. Pisgah Church, in 1839, and was baptized by Elder William H. Holcombe, who was one of the ministers engaged in that meeting. He soon felt it to be his duty to preach the gospel, and felt that to do so successfully, he must secure a good education. His father sent him to the Nashville University. He became while there a member of the First Baptist Church of Nashville, of which Dr. R. B. C. Howell was pastor. At the age of seventeen he was licensed to preach by that church. His health failed while at the University at Nashville, and he had to return home before he completed his course. When his health was restored, he went to Mississippi and engaged in teaching school, still determined to fit himself thoroughly for his life work. After teaching a while, he entered the Western Theological Institute, at Covington, Kentucky, where he graduated in 1847. In December, 1847, he was elected pastor of the First Baptist Church of the city of Houston, Texas, where he remained three and a half years. He was elected president of Baylor University then at Independence, Texas,

now at Waco. He is still president of that Institution. Perhaps Dr. Burleson has done more for the religious and educational advancement of Texas than any one man in the State. His efforts have been untiring and success has crowned his labors. "His success is not the result of accident, but of the habits acquired in boyhood on the farm, and by following the precepts of a pious father." He never used tobacco, nor intoxicating drinks; was never in a theater, ball room, nor on a race ground; knew nothing of cards, billiards nor chess; he never swore but one oath and that in boyhood, and under sudden and great provocation. Some few men in this world are successful in spite of the vices referred to, but the great majority who indulge in them prove failures. The one great purpose of Dr. Burleson's life was to found a great Texas Baptist University, and in this he has been eminently successful. Baylor University, Waco, Texas, is a monument to the energy, perseverance and indomitable will of Rufus C. Burleson. At this writing he is still living, sixty-seven years old. We give this brief sketch of the life of Dr. Burleson, because he was once identified with one of the churches of this association, and many of his relatives have been prominent in our association. His life, as a minister, has been spent elsewhere, but occasionally he visits his old home, and preaches at the church where he first embraced the Saviour. In April, 1889, he preached a jubilee sermon, commemorative of his baptism at Mt. Pisgah fifty years before, to a large congregation. There were only three or four persons present who were present at his baptism. It was an interesting and enjoyable occasion, and will not soon be forgotten by those who were present. It did us good to hear our brother tell of his trials and labors in the Master's cause for fifty years. We trust that our brother may

be spared many years more to labor for that cause which he loves so well.

ELDER RICHARD BYRD BURLESON, A.M., LL.D.

Was the son of Jonathan and Elizabeth Byrd Burleson, and younger brother of Dr. Rufus C. Burleson. Both were cousins of General Edward Burleson, of Texas fame. He was born near Decatur, Alabama, and died at Waco, Texas, December 21, 1879. He grew up amid the stirring, active duties of the farm, and strict attendance upon a country school. He was prepared for the Nashville University, at Somerville Academy. He had made preparation and secured the pledge for cadetship at West Point, but his father generously waived the claim in the interest of a son of a poor widow, now the illustrious General Longstreet. He was converted in 1839 and was baptized into the fellowship of Mt. Pisgah Church by Elder W. H. Holcombe, at the same time that his brother Rufus was baptized. He entered Nashville University in 1840, and remained three years. He was licensed to preach in 1841, by the First Baptist Church of Nashville, Dr. R. B. C. Howell, pastor. He was called to ordination by the Athens Alabama Baptist Church, in 1842, and was pastor of that church two years. In 1845, he accepted the call of the Tuscumbia Baptist Church, and remained its pastor four years. In 1849, he took charge of a school at Moulton, Alabama, which school, by action of the Muscle Shoals Association was adopted as an associational school, and called "The Baptist Female Institute." He was principal of this school until 1855, when he resigned and removed to Texas. Elder Burleson was moderator of the Muscle Shoals Association in 1853, 1854 and 1855. He was pastor of Moulton Church during the time he was teaching there. In 1856,

he was pastor of the church at Austin, Texas. In 1857, he became professor of Natural Science in Baylor University. In 1861, he was elected vice president of Waco University now Baylor, in which capacity he served until his death. He was twice married. His first wife was Miss Sarah Leigh, daughter of Elder Wm. Leigh. His second wife was Miss Mary Halbert of Mississippi. He left two sons and one daughter by his first wife.

Elder Burleson was a profound scholar and student in theology, botany and astronomy. He was a successful teacher. As an orator, his style was gentle and persuasive, logical rather than impassioned, his manner graceful and impressive. As an educator he was pre-eminent. He was original in his methods. He had rare powers of analysis, and was able to fix the attention of his students upon each part of the subject under consideration. With all this he was most earnest, and never failed to inspire his pupils with his own love and thirst for knowledge. As a man, he was frank, candid and pure; by nature kindly; and in his manner gentle and most amiable in his general deportment. Tender and sympathetic, he rejoiced with those that rejoiced, and wept with those that wept. He died as he had lived. He endured with christian patience his extreme sufferings. His most intense suffering was anxiety for a helpless family and the final success of his life work, the foundation of a great Baptist University, with which he had been identified for eighteen years. But finally he was enabled to commit his helpless ones to a Merciful Father, and the university to the Baptists of Texas. In his last days he prayed earnestly for his helpless ones, and that the brethren would not suffer his toils, his sacrifices, his tears to be as water spilled upon the ground. At the last service held at his bedside by his pastor and many brethren and

sisters, he had read the twenty-third Psalm, and the latter part of the eighth of Romans, he then requested them to sing again, and again, "How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent word."

His last hour was spent with his brother, Dr. R. C. Burleson, and his last word was good-bye, to his wife. One of his last utterances was "I want to see the promised land like Moses." He left the world in the midst of his usefulness. The providences of God are mysterious, and we cannot always understand them. Why our Brother Burleson should be taken away at a time, when to the eyes of short sighted mortals he appeared to be doing a great work, we cannot understand. But we know that it is all right, for the Judge of all the earth will do right."

ELDER ABSALOM L. STOVALL

Was born in Giles county, Tennessee, December 25th, 1809. His father moved to Lawrence county, Alabama, when he was quite young. At the age of twenty-one he married Miss M. K. Harris. He made a profession of religion in his twenty-first year and joined the Baptist Church. We suppose it was Town Creek Church, Lawrence county, Alabama, as his parents lived near that church. He was baptized by Elder Sylvanus Gibson. The above we get from his son James Tatum Stovall, of Texas, but it must have been after 1832, that he was baptized, as Elder Gibson did not move to Alabama until 1832. He commenced preaching when he was thirty-two years old. We find his name as clerk of the association in 1840. He continued as clerk from 1840 to 1850. In 1851 and 1852, he was moderator. In 1852, he was employed by the trustees of the Baptist Female Institute,

at Moulton, as agent to raise funds for building purposes. He succeeded in raising by subscriptions, \$5000. In the fall of 1852, he removed with his family to Mississippi and settled near Tupelo, where he spent the remainder of his life. He assisted in organizing the Judson Association, in Mississippi, and was its moderator up to the time of his death, which occurred July 4, 1872. At that time he was pastor of three churches, viz: Tupelo, Centerville and Pilgrim's Rest.

Elder Stovall was a very popular preacher. In his manner, he was mild and persuasive. While firm in his doctrinal views, and bold to express them, yet he did so with such a spirit of love, that no one could take offense. His name was a household word among the Baptists of the Muscle Shoals Association, long after he left them.

The writer had the pleasure of forming his acquaintance in Mississippi a short time after the war. He found him to fully come up to the character which had been given him by his friends in Alabama. He was a most amiable Christian gentleman, and beloved by all who knew him. He did a great work, both in Alabama and Mississippi. As a preacher, he was earnest, tender and persuasive, forcible in his arguments. He preached Christ crucified with such power and zeal that hearers were compelled to listen. He gave great satisfaction, as a pastor, to the churches with which he labored. He was pastor of his own church, Town Creek, many years. He was also pastor of the Moulton and Courtland Churches. He served the latter from 1845 to 1850. He was much beloved by the membership of this church, who made an effort to secure his services for two Sundays in each month, in 1851. The following letter, which we find recorded in the minute book of that church, shows the spirit which animated this beloved brother:

DECEMBER 14, 1850.

Dear Brethren M. W. Mays, Wm. Puryear and Thomas Ashford:

I received yours of December 2nd, and should have replied sooner but have delayed in order that I might duly consider your request. I have been, to the best of my ability, preaching to the church and congregation in Courtland, five years. During my labors with you, I no doubt have erred, for I am a fallible man, but I have great satisfaction in knowing that I have not knowingly shunned to declare the truth of God. How far my ministry has been, or will be blessed of the Lord in your midst, is known to Him who knoweth all things. I trust you will pray that God in mercy will forgive wherein we may have sinned and bless our labors of love, causing the seed sown to produce much fruit to His glory, and the salvation of sinners.

The many pleasant interviews we have enjoyed are now numbered with things that are passed and gone, no more to return. I hope I shall never be wanting a heart to remember with gratitude the many kindnesses shown me and my family by the church and congregation in Courtland. During the five years I have been, both in and out of the pulpit, treated with much attention and respect.

In reply to your request, that I should continue to supply the church, I will refer to the remarks I made to the church at the close of the year 1849. My feelings and situations are about as they were then. I agreed last spring to attend the church until the winter, that you might have time to look out a minister. This I have done the best I could. I had intended to preach a farewell sermon at the November meeting, but Brother Burleson had agreed to preach on a particular subject, and I did not mention my intention, thinking I might be with you in December. My reasons for declining to serve the church longer are these: the distance, the want of sufficient bodily strength to encounter the weather many times, and fatigue of so much labor, both of body and mind; my affairs at home require more of my attention, than I have given for the last five years—I mean the duties I owe to my family. You may be astonished, when I tell you, that at times I feel like I was almost worn out. I think it my duty to rest as much as possible, and be more with my little boys. If my life is spared, and strength afforded, I expect to labor in the cause of Him who died for me, as long as I live, and humbly hope that we shall be, through grace, prepared to praise Him together in a better world than this.

In leaving you, I only would say, be faithful unto death, in the discharge of all your duties as members of Christ's church—love one another—live in peace. Be careful to observe all the rules given by the great Head of the church. Remember that this is not our home. Set your affections on things above. Expect soon to die, and realize the truths contained in the Bible respecting the future. Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; but contend in love for the truth's sake.

It will depend on the weather and my health whether I am at your next meeting. I hope the church will proceed without delay to supply their pulpit. Present my best love and that of my family to your families and all my friends.

Yours in brotherly love,

A. L. STOVALL.

We have in this letter a glimpse of the character of the man. A loving kind disposition, a tender regard for the people to whom he preached.

ELDER SYLVANUS GIBSON

Was born in Wilkes county, Georgia, November 24, 1783, and died at his residence, in Lawrence county, Alabama, July 25, 1851. His end was calm and peaceful. He died as he had lived, trusting in Christ. He was baptized at Clark's Station, Georgia, and labored in the ministry in that State eighteen years, with great acceptance and success. He removed to Alabama in the year 1832. His services as a minister were soon in demand, when the churches found out his ability in the pulpit. He, and his wife Polly, joined Hopewell Church by letter, in April, 1833. He was chosen pastor of the same at the March meeting, in 1834, and continued until his death, a period of seventeen years. He supplied the Enon Church as pastor eighteen years. He was pastor of Shilo Church, Morgan county, ten years. He was pastor of Town Creek Church, Lawrence county, six years. He also at various times supplied Salem, Friendship and Harmony Grove Churches for several years. Elder Gibson was a great revivalist. He loved to be engaged in revival meetings, and his churches were blessed with revivals of religion. It is supposed that he, during his ministry, baptized at least 1000 persons. He seems to have had great influence over his congregations. His preaching was earnest and exhortatory, though he did not shun to preach doctrine, and the doctrine of his church. He was a popular man among his brethren, this is shown in the honor they conferred upon him in making him moderator of the association for thirteen successive sessions. He was chosen moderator in 1838, and continued until his death. He was frequently called upon to preach the introductory sermon. Ten or twelve ministers grew up under his ministry in north Alabama. The committee which was appointed to prepare a memorial of him, which memorial was printed in the minutes of 1851, said: "And the king said unto his servants, know ye not, that there

is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel.' And truly can we say that a good man has fallen, and a light has gone out among us, and Zion is called to mourn indeed. The decease of our much beloved and truly lamented brother in Christ, and father in the gospel, Sylvanus Gibson, it is our mournful duty to announce this day officially to this association." That report further on says: "His death has produced a vacuum that we believe it will be difficult to fill, and we know not where to find his equal. He will be long and affectionately remembered by his brethren and neighbors. He was to every man a brother and a neighbor in the true Christian sense of the endearing terms." The above indicates the esteem in which Elder Gibson was held by the association. His influence was very great throughout the bounds of the association, and is felt to this day. He has a grandson, Elder John G. Gibson, who is a minister of considerable reputation, living in Georgia.

ELDER ENOCH WINDES, SR.

Was born in northern Missouri, of Scotch-Irish parents, July 1, 1809. His father was a carpenter of humble circumstances, and he was his youngest son. At the age of twelve he left the parental home to work for himself. He first worked in the lead mines, and there came in contact with the worst elements of society, which did not have a softening and refining influence upon his character. He soon returned home, but differences between him and his father arose, and he again went out into the wide world to make his own fortune. This time he went to Louisiana, and engaged in making cypress shingles in the swamps. He soon fell a prey to malignant fever. He suffered for many weeks, and when able to get about, he determined to cross the Mississippi river and seek higher ground and purer air. He attempted to cross in a frail canoe, which being struck by a log was sunk, leaving him in the water, a considerable distance from the shore. Realizing that his life depended upon his efforts, with a bold spirit and indomitable will, he swam for the shore, and reached it, dripping and utterly exhausted.

A brief sojourn in the highlands of Mississippi brought back his usual health and vigor. He again plunged into the swamps, but was again taken sick and was brought out by an elder brother. About this time, his older brother, Samuel, settled with his family in Mississippi. His wife had relatives in Kentucky, and through them he was induced to go to Kentucky. Here he entered an academy and acquired a fair English education. Nothing is known of his purposes when he entered school, but while in school he was led to reflection on his spiritual condition. These reflections grew more and more earnest, until one night when on a lonely journey from a distant neighborhood, he surrendered himself to God in faith, and found himself indulging new desires and hopes. Soon he wanted to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to sinners. This, however, he could not get his consent to communicate to any friend, but quietly turned his studies in that direction. He joined the debating club of the school, that he might learn to speak in public. His first effort in the club was a mortifying failure. He tried to use notes, but was so much confused that his notes were of no value to him. He never afterwards tried to use notes in public speaking. He felt the necessity of being thoroughly acquainted with the Scriptures, and commenced committing the New Testament to memory. He soon saw that the proper way to study the Scriptures was to find out and study their principles. At this he could not succeed so well as in memorizing. Having no helper or counsellor, he became discouraged and began to wander in his thoughts and feelings from his purpose. He became discontented; school was no longer desirable; business was distasteful. Whither he went and what he did no one but himself ever knew. Then, near thirty years old, he drifted south and appeared at Apple Grove, a small village in Morgan county, Alabama, about the year 1839, and began teaching a country school. He suited the people of this neighborhood as a teacher, and soon became popular. He married Mary Ann Ryan, daughter of Thomas Ryan, Esq., a man of prominence in that community. With but little of this world's goods, they commenced house keeping, living on a forty acre

tract of land, about three miles from Mr. Ryan's. Here they lived in very uncomfortable quarters until a better house could be built. Elder Windes taught school as a means of support, and split boards on moonlight nights for his house. During a protracted meeting held in the neighborhood by a Baptist minister named L. H. Millikin, Mrs. Windes professed religion and was baptized. Mr. Windes, to all human appearances, had no interest in the meeting. On the contrary, he remonstrated with his wife about her constant attendance on the meetings. On a certain Sunday he dug his crop of potatoes, while his wife was at church. On another day, when his wife returned from church she found an advertisement of the sale of all their property lying on their dining table. The only explanation was a purpose to quit the country forever. But before the meeting closed, a revolution of feeling and thought came over him, he heartily repented of his course, acknowledged his sin and sought baptism and church membership. Long was "Millikin's meeting" a household expression with that couple.

The writer was well acquainted with Brother L. H. Millikin. He was for many years pastor of the Baptist Church, at Aberdeen, Mississippi, and afterwards at Jackson, Mississippi. Elder Windes joined Salem Church, in October, 1839. He soon began to exercise in public, and was ordained in 1840 by a presbytery consisting of Thomas Briscoe, Elexius Thompson and Thomas Jones. For a while his preaching was confined to his own neighborhood, but soon he was known in other neighborhoods and his services sought for. He preached often at Shilo, and appears at one time to have been pastor of that church. He was pastor also of his own church. He was clerk of the Muscle Shoals Association for two sessions, 1853-54. He was a popular preacher. He was a fine reasoner, but his terribly earnest nature gave him great power in exhortation. He studied his sermons closely. He read little else than his Bible when engaged regularly in preaching. His leisure hours were generally spent in reading history. His concentration of mind on his work was so great that after the first year or two his health broke down. During some of these

spells of sickness brought on by excessive mental and physical labors, he would conclude that God had not called him to preach, and had afflicted him for making the effort. When in this state of mind, he could not be prevailed on to preach. For months, and sometimes for years he would stay away from church services, to avoid the importunities of his friends, to preach.

At the beginning of the civil war he was in good financial circumstances, being worth about \$20,000. When the war closed all was swept away except his land. He was very anxious about the education of his children. His eldest son, Col. F. M. Windes, was graduated from college with the understanding that he was to assist in the education of the other children. He established a school at Apple Grove, but the war coming on, he enlisted in the confederate service; coming out of that wounded and broken in health, he could not stand the confinement of the school room. So the hope of giving an education to the other children was blasted. They succeeded, however, by perseverance and energy in securing a pretty good education. Two of his sons, Enoch and R. A. Windes, are Baptist ministers, and have both labored in the Muscle Shoals Association; one, W. H. Windes is a minister of the Christian Church, and principal of the Hartsell High School. One is a lawyer of some eminence in Chicago, Illinois. He also left one or more daughters who have been educated by their brothers. Elder Windes died at his residence near Apple Grove, Alabama, in the triumphs of a living faith, March 23, 1872, with most of his children around him. His latter days were more peaceful and restful than his earlier ones.

ENOCH WINDES, JR.,

Son of Enoch Windes, Sr., was born near Apple Grove, Morgan county, Alabama, February 1, 1844. He served in the confederate army, in Roddey's cavalry, during the civil war. He made a good soldier. He was a Christian, when he went into the army, and maintained his character as such for three years during that terrible struggle. He was ordained as a minister of Christ at Salem Church,

November 16, 1862, being a little over eighteen years old. The presbytery were, Elders J. K. Lynn, M. A. Verser and John Holmes. After the war he lived two years in Lawrence county, Alabama, serving as missionary of the Muscle Shoals Association, and also of the General Association of north Alabama, of which he was clerk one year. He married Miss Maria Stanley, eldest daughter of Brother Edward Stanley, a prominent member of Mt. Pleasant Church. She was a most estimable young lady and was a pupil of the writer. She has no doubt made him a good wife. Elder Windes moved to middle Tennessee, and engaged in teaching and occasional preaching for five years. He then moved to Murfreesboro, Tennessee, with his family, in order to finish his literary course in Union University, which he did, graduating in 1872. He then taught school in Wilson county, Tennessee, and preached to some country churches for five years. After this he moved to Ashland, Benton county, Mississippi, where he taught school and preached for five years. After this, he gave up teaching, and has devoted himself to the ministry. He is now pastor of the Baptist Church at Paris, Tennessee.

Elder Windes possesses talent and energy. His preaching is plain and to the point. He is capable of doing much good, and we trust that his life may be fruitful of good works, and that he may be spared long to work for the Master.

ELDER WM. H. BARKSDALE

Was born February 19, 1827, in Rutherford county, Tennessee and was the only child of Randolph Barksdale and Susan C. (Williams). His father had other children by a former and later marriage. William's mother, dying when he was yet a child of only three years of age, requested her husband to consent for her mother, Mrs. Williams, to raise him as she would her own. This request was granted, and nobly did that grandmother perform her part towards her adopted child, teaching him at a very early age to read and love his Bible. William became the subject of divine grace at a very early period of life, but made

no open profession until his fourteenth year, at which time he was baptized by Elder R. W. January into the fellowship of Enon Church, Rutherford county, near Murfreesboro. He early felt it to be his duty to prepare for the ministry, and would often hold meetings with his father's servants on Wednesday and Sunday nights.

At the death of his grandparents he removed to his father's. But death soon severed these ties, his father dying June 26, 1844. Being left to his own resources, his purpose was to secure an education to fit him for the work of the ministry. Having made the acquaintance of Dr. Jos. H. Eaton, president of Union University, he made arrangements with him to enter that institution upon the condition that he would give his note for the tuition, payable at some future time when he might be able to pay it. The same arrangements were made for his board with a good lady, Mrs. Burton. He *refused* to receive aid from the beneficiary funds. He afterwards taught school and paid off these debts.

He next entered Georgetown College, Kentucky, and remained there, until the state of his finances made it necessary to suspend his collegiate course. He afterwards received the degree of A. M. from Union University.

He was married to Miss Mary F. Bashette, daughter of Dr. Wm. Bashette, of Murfreesboro, July 31, 1846.

He preached and taught school at Middleton, Tennessee, till his appointment by the Executive Board of the General Association of middle Tennessee and north Alabama, to Florence, Alabama. He remained here only a short time, the churches of Mt. Pleasant and Liberty having solicited him to preach for them. He bought him a small farm, near Mt. Pleasant Church, in Lawrence county, Alabama, and removed to it. He preached to these churches with great success. He was also pastor of Courtland Church from 1855 to 1857. Having received a call to the Church at Helena, Arkansas, he resigned his charges in Alabama, and removed to that city in 1858, or the latter part of 1857. Here he remained until after the Civil War. He was a successful pastor here, and the church was growing until the war came up. He held services during the war in his church, until it was taken as a hos-

pital. He then put up at his own expense a large room in his yard, where he gathered the children together and taught them through the week and preached to them on Sundays. Immediately after the war for one or two years, he preached to Shufordville Church, Mississippi, Spring Creek and Forest Chapel Churches, Arkansas, dividing his time between those places and Helena.

His wife died in 1866. Some time after he visited relatives in Tennessee, and while there became acquainted with Miss Lucy Donoho, to whom he was married July 1, 1867. He, soon after his second marriage, removed from Helena to the neighborhood of Memphis, Tennessee where he now resides. In 1855, Elder Barksdale was elected clerk of the Muscle Shoals Association, and was continued until he left the State. He wrote the circular letter in 1853 on "Close Communion," which was a strong paper, bristling with arguments and facts in favor of the Baptist position upon this subject. The brethren of the Muscle Shoals Association regretted very much to give up Elder Barksdale. They considered him one of their ablest ministers.

As a preacher, Elder Barksdale has been universally popular with his churches. He is intensely Baptist, and this has made a few opposers in one or two localities. What he believes he dares to preach. He is full of enthusiasm, entering into his subject with his whole soul. While courteous to other denominations, and sometimes officiating with Pedo-Baptist ministers in their pulpits, he is devoted to the cherished doctrine of Baptists, and advocates and defends them with all the ability and earnestness he can command.

We consider Elder Barksdale one of our best working ministers. He is also no mean writer, as many of his productions in print testify. He is now, and has been for many years, preaching to churches in Tennessee and Mississippi on the railroads—going out from Memphis. In 1885, he was pastor of Tuscumbia Church, coming from his home near Memphis, 150 miles.

Brother Barksdale is of ordinary stature, pleasant and genial in the social circle, a good companion, with a quick and impulsive disposition. He is now (1890) about six-

ty-three years old, yet retaining much of the life and vigor of youth.

ELDER PHILIP M. MUSGROVE.

This brother was once connected with the Muscle Shoals Association, and has been a prominent minister among north Alabama Baptists for over forty years.

He was born in South Carolina, Edgefield district, March 12, 1817. He was brought by his parents to Blount county, Alabama, in the fall of 1822. They settled near Blount's Springs, where they lived for several years, and then moved to within four miles of Blountsville, the county-seat.

Elder Musgrove's school advantages were limited. When about ten years old, he went to a country school about one year. Several years after this, he received about six months schooling. This constituted the amount of education he received at school.

On the 8th of December, 1836, he married Miss Louisa White.

He was baptized into the fellowship of Mt. Tabor Church, Blount county, about 1838 or 1839; commenced preaching in 1842, and was ordained a gospel minister on the 19th of May, 1844, by a presbytery consisting of Elders Thomas Smith, of Franklin county, Alabama, and his father John T. Musgrove. In 1842, Mt. Tabor Church withdrew from the Mt. Zion Association, because that association had, a year before, added an article to her constitution declaring non-fellowship with all missionary operations, Sunday Schools, Bible Societies, etc.

In 1844, Mt. Tabor Church was received into the Muscle Shoals Association, at a meeting held with Town Creek Church. At the session of the association held with Mt. Nebo Church in 1845, Elder Musgrove was appointed by a Missionary Society of the Muscle Shoals Association, a missionary in connection with Elder E. D. Stephenson and J. C. Vincent. His salary was \$200. In 1846, when the association had become a missionary body, he and Elder Vincent were appointed missionaries by that body to travel and preach within its bounds.

In 1847, he and Elder Wm. Irwin were appointed missionaries. During these years of missionary labors, several churches were constituted by Brother Musgrove and the other missionaries, and many persons baptized. The anti-missionary Baptists closed their doors against the missionaries and were very bitter against them. They had to preach under bush arbors, in private houses, and under the shade of the trees. At the time he commenced as a missionary of the association, there were in Blount county only three missionary Baptist Churches, none in Marshall county, and none in the eastern part of Walker county. Now, in this same territory, there are four missionary Baptist Associations, viz: Warrior River, Sulphur Springs, Cullman and Mt. Carmel.

Brother Musgrove, after traveling three years as missionary of the association, traveled four years as missionary of the Domestic Mission Board, now Home Mission Board, of the Southern Baptist Convention. He has been pastor of the following churches: Mt. Tabor, Hopewell, Good Hope, Harmony, Blountsville, Union, White Plains, all in Blount county, Brown's Valley, Blue Spring in Marshall, Arkadelphia, Walker county, Springville, in St. Clair county, and Cullman, in Cullman county. At White Plains Church, he held a protracted meeting on one occasion. There was a Methodist Church near, with forty members, during the meeting he baptized thirty-seven Methodists. He was pastor of Walnut Grove Church, now in Etowah county; and some other churches in Cullman county. During his ministry he has baptized 500 persons, among whom were three Methodist preachers. Brother Musgrove's life has been a busy one. He has preached a great deal and has received very little for it. Living in a section of the country where churches have never been educated and taught that "the laborer is worthy of his hire," and where they were built up by missionaries who were paid by others, hence they did not realize their responsibilities. He was compelled to engage in secular pursuits in order to support his family and educate his children. He has practiced both medicine and law, yet he has never ceased preaching. Doubtless he would have been a better preacher had he given his whole time to the ministry.

Elder Musgrove delights in doctrinal preaching, and has made the distinctive doctrines of Baptists a special study.

In his manner, he is earnest and forcible, but lacks that training, which school advantages in early life would have given him, which would have made him a more attractive and polished speaker.

He is well acquainted with the Scriptures, and uses them freely in his sermons. Though his early education was quite limited, yet he has acquired a very considerable amount of information in almost every department of knowledge. He has been a close student, and has well improved his time and opportunities. Had he had the advantages that many of our young preachers now have, he would easily have taken his place among the first men of our denominations as a theologian and a preacher. We owe much to Brother Musgrove, as Baptists, for the work he did in the counties of Blount, Morgan, Marshall and Walker, when a missionary and since, in stemming the tide of anti-missionism and antinomianism, which set against every effort made by our fathers to have the gospel preached to all men.

The anti-missionary churches once in the ascendant, have dwindled down to almost none. They have lost power and influence. This may be attributed, in part, to the preaching of the gospel by our missionaries to the people, and to the spread of knowledge among them.

Brother Musgrove is the author of a small volume entitled "The Baptist Code, with articles of Christian Belief, Rules of Order, Order of Business, etc." This is a valuable little book to all who wish to know something about what Baptists believe and the way to conduct business in church.

Elder Musgrove resides in Cullman, Alabama, and for one of his age, 73, appears to be strong and vigorous.

ELDER JOHN C. ROBERTS.

This brother was born in Alabama, Lawrence county, February 14, 1821. He was the son of Mathew Roberts, who was one of the early settlers of Lawrence county.

He professed religion when he was about eighteen years old. He was baptized into the fellowship of Town Creek Church, by Elder Sylvanus Gibson where he continued a member until his death, which occurred July 3, 1885. He was the first of his family that became religious. He was twice married. His first wife was a Miss Emeline Flanagan. His second wife was a Mrs. Pearson. He was the father of eleven children, nine of them are still living (1890). Four sons and five daughters. Brother Roberts was ordained to the gospel ministry, about the year 1846, by Elders John Edmiston and A. L. Stovall. He was called to the pastorate of Town Creek Church in 1853, and served eight years. He was also pastor of Russell Valley Church, Russellville, Macedonia, in Franklin county, Cherry Hill, Salem, Pleasant Grove and other churches at different times in his ministry. He served as missionary of the Muscle Shoals Association for a year or more. He was clerk of the association for thirteen sessions. Brother Roberts was a very acceptable preacher, well read in the Scriptures. He kept himself informed upon the doctrinal views of Baptists, and was always ready to give a reason for his belief, and defend with zeal and earnestness what he considered the teachings of the Scriptures upon those points of difference between Baptists and other denominations. His education was limited, but he read a great deal, especially the Bible and Baptist literature, and thus kept himself abreast with the times. Being of ready speech, he was able to make use of his acquired information successfully, and interest and instruct an audience.

ELDER J. M. ROBERTS,

The son of Elder J. C. Roberts and his wife Emeline, was born November 4, 1844. He professed religion at the age of fourteen and joined the Town Creek Church, Lawrence county, Alabama. He was ordained to the ministry in 1870, by a presbytery consisting of Elders John L. Lattimore and J. C. Roberts. He has served a number of churches. We mention a few: Harmony, Salem, New Hope, Macedonia, in Morgan county, Pleas-

ant Grove, Bethany. He is now pastor of New Prospect and several other churches. Elder Roberts is a minister of good ability and if he could give his entire time to the work, would become very useful. He has a good knowledge of Scripture, and an easy and attractive delivery. The church to which he preaches should put him in a condition to serve them better and more effectively. He has a family to support, and necessity forces him to labor with his hands in secular pursuits, so that he cannot prepare himself as he ought to for his ministerial duties. Elder Roberts resides in Lawrence county, near Moulton.

ELDER BUTLER WILLIAMS

Was the first pastor of Rocky Creek Church, Morgan county, Alabama, and served it about five years. He moved from Georgia to Alabama in 1867 or 1868. He was then an old man. During the short time he was permitted to live in Alabama, he exerted a wonderful influence as a preacher. His reasonings on the Scriptures were deep and convincing. In doctrine, he was strong and uncompromising and his preaching was with power, through the spirit, which gained the love and admiration of his hearers. Rocky Creek Church prospered under him, and soon took the lead of all other churches in the community, both in the number of conversions, and in the love and devotion of its members. The foundation of his sermons was Christ. He knew nothing but Christ and him crucified. He was faithful unto death, and died as he had lived with full faith in the power of Christ's blood to save to the uttermost all who would come unto Him. Elder John E. Weaver, from whom we get the above, thus speaks of Elder Williams: "I regard this man, as having done more in building up the Baptist cause in the eastern part of the association than any other man, who lived here no longer than he did."

ELDER T. J. WEAVER

Was born in Lawrence county, Georgia, July 19, 1845. He was brought to Morgan county, Alabama, by his par-

ents in early life. He was the son of a farmer, and spent his boyhood days in following the plow. The civil war in which he took part for three years, prevented him from securing an education, which he very much desired. He was a faithful soldier in the Confederate Army. In September, 1869, he joined Rocky Creek Church, and soon began to give some evidence of a call to the ministry. In 1871, he was ordained to that work. He at once entered upon the duties of his office, and gave his time and talent to churches which were slow to aid in gospel support. The duties of a pastor poorly paid, and the cares of life pressed heavily upon him, and he soon learned to endure hardness as a good soldier. Under these burdens he was brought near the throne of God. He rejoiced in spirit under the darkest trials of his life, and success has crowned his labors. Many have been converted under his ministry, and his earnest exhortations have been helpful to the brethren where he has preached. He has served as missionary in the third district of the association for the last six years of his life, and now in the vigor of manhood he promises to gather many sheaves for his Master.

ELDER JOHN E. WEAVER,

A younger brother of T. J. Weaver, was born in Morgan county, Alabama, May 8, 1851. He joined the Rocky Creek Church in 1869. He spent the early years of his manhood in teaching school. He was ordained to the gospel ministry, July 7, 1878. He has never consecrated himself fully to the work, and has never relied upon his church for support. He has no regular salary from his churches but labors with his own hands, that he may have to give to him that hath need, and hence is a liberal giver to the various missionary and benevolent institutions of the denomination.

Elder Weaver is one of the growing ministers of our association. He has talent and force of character that will make him eminently useful. In 1888, Elder Weaver, at the earnest solicitation of his friends, consented to become a candidate for representative to the legislature.

He was nominated by the democratic convention, and elected. He made a faithful public servant, but was satisfied with one term having no further aspirations after political honors, and fully convinced of the dangers surrounding a minister of the gospel, who becomes an aspirant for political preferment. He entered more fully upon his ministerial work, conscious that this alone demanded his efforts and ability.

He has charge of the following churches : Blue Spring, New Salem, Falkville, each of which displays some spiritual growth and constant increase.

ELDER MAT. LYON.

Mathew Lyon was born in Warren county, Tennessee, near McMinnville, on the 27th of August, 1812. He was the son of Major James Lyon, who published papers in New Orleans before the war of 1812, and who was the first person who ever published a newspaper in the English language in Mobile. Major Lyon was the oldest son of Col. Mathew Lyon, a native of Ireland, a member of congress from Vermont, and who was one of the few prominent men who were convicted under the unconstitutional, tyrannical and short-lived "Sedition Law" of 1798. He was fined \$1060.90, an extremely heavy amount for those times of frontier life and poverty ; and under scandalous insults, paraded by the marshal in a circuitous route through villages and cruelly imprisoned for four months in winter, and was triumphantly re-elected to congress while in prison. Before Elder Lyon's remembrance, his father removed with his family to South Carolina. He was brought up a printer in Chesterfield district, in Cheraw, in the printing office of his father who established the first newspaper in that town. Elder Lyon attended the town academy for several years. Among his schoolmates, were James H. Thornwell, a son of a highly esteemed Baptist lady. He afterwards became a distinguished Presbyterian writer and doctor of divinity ; and Patrick Lynch, afterwards, the Roman Catholic Bishop in Charleston, and a special friend of needy confederate soldiers ; Miss Rebecca Ellerbe, who

became the wife of A. W. Chambliss, D. D., late of Alabama, was also a most commendable student in that school. Elder Lyon's father died in 1824. From December, 1829, to March, 1831, he worked during the congressional sessions, in the printing office of General Duff Green, editor of the United States Telegraph, in Washington, D. C. After returning home, he went to work at printing in Camden, South Carolina, and was there baptized in March, 1832, by Elder John M. Barnes, a pious, impulsive man, who afterwards joined the Disciples of the "Current Reformation." In April, 1836, the mother of Elder Lyon with three of her children returned to McMinnville, Tennessee, where, after being the chief agent in effecting the organization of a Baptist Church, and building a good house of worship, she died January 3, 1869, affectionately revered and lamented, not only by relatives, but by many others, who united in erecting a monument to her memory. In 1837, Elder Lyon, at the request of Dr. R. B. C. Howell, conducted *The Baptist*, a monthly publication, which he had established at Nashville, two years before. In 1838, he worked for Philip Woodson in the office of the *Huntsville Democrat*. At that time Baptists were very scarce in Huntsville. There was an old Baptist Church in the western suburbs of the town, but no preaching in it.

In 1840, he taught school at Pleasant Ridge, Green county, Alabama. In 1841, he worked at printing in Pickensville, and he remained in Pickens county for about fourteen years.

On the 25th of June, 1843, he married Miss Susannah Muscogee, daughter of Elder Lee Compere, of Mississippi. They were married at Providence Baptist Church, Sumpter county, Alabama, by Elder Burwell B. Barnes of Mississippi. Her parents were from England, and were sent out early in life, missionaries to Jamaica. His health failing, they removed to South Carolina, and afterwards for many years they had charge of the Baptist mission and school in the Creek nation of Indians, in Alabama, till their removal west, in 1836. Elder Compere preached extensively, chiefly in the Southern States. He died in Texas, June 15, 1871. His eldest daughter was the wife

of Elder S. S. Lattimore, a distinguished Baptist minister in Mississippi and Alabama, and the mother of Elder John L. Lattimore, who was for a number of years principal of the Institute at Moulton, and pastor of the Baptist Church at that place. Elder Lyon followed the printing business at Pickensville a few years, afterward he practiced law, and became register in chancery at Carrolton, which position he held for four years. Early in 1849, the Carrolton Baptist Church licensed him to preach, and on the twenty-third of June following, he was ordained to the ministry of the gospel. The presbytery consisted of Elders S. S. Lattimore, Wm. Stansell, Charles Stewart, John H. Taylor, C. B. Saunders, T. S. Thomas and M. C. Curry. After preaching two or three years, Elder Lyon retired from the law and taught school in connection with his ministerial duties. He served acceptably as pastor at different times, the following churches in Pickens county: Ebenezer, Providence, Spring Hill, Carrolton and Pickensville. In 1854, Elder Lyon removed to Brooksville, Mississippi, and engaged in teaching school and preaching to churches. He remained here three years. In 1858, he was pastor of Grenada Church, Mississippi, and a teacher in the Baptist Female Institute at that place. In a revival there, he baptized on one occasion twenty-three young ladies of the Institute, and one of the lady teachers. In the latter part of 1859, at the urgent request of Baptists in Memphis, he started the publication of the *Baptist Messenger*, a weekly newspaper, which was discontinued during the first year of the war. During the time he was running the paper he preached to churches in Mississippi. Removing from Memphis, he lived successively in Hernando, Panola and Grenada, Mississippi, preaching, printing and teaching at different times. In 1865-66, he was a missionary of the Home Mission Board. In the latter half of the year 1867, Elder Lyon superintended the printing office of Elder Jos. Shackelford, at Tuscumbia, Alabama, who was publishing the *Christian Herald*, a Baptist weekly. In 1868, he returned to Mississippi and settled at Winona. Here he occupied himself in printing, and then in agencies, and preaching to various churches. After staying here a few

years, he removed to Moulton, Alabama, where his only daughter and child, Mrs. Laura Chitwood, wife of W. P. Chitwood, Esq., lived. He did not remain here long, having been called back to Central Church, Holmes county, Mississippi. He commenced preaching to this church and to others, in 1876, living in Carrolton, and continued there until 1880, when he removed to Moulton, Alabama, that he and his wife might be with their only remaining child. In 1881, he became pastor of the Moulton Church, and thus remained for about nine years. He also has been pastor of the following churches at different times: Danville, Enon, Harmony and Pleasant Grove. He has been missionary of the association for several years, laboring in Lawrence and Franklin counties. As a preacher, Elder Lyon is esteemed sound in doctrine and very instructive, as he gives to every subject he preaches about close study and thorough examination. He does not deal in rhetorical flourishes, but in solid thought. His sentences are perhaps too long, and too many parentheses are thrown in among them, which tends to confuse, yet, notwithstanding this, he generally makes himself understood. Some consider him dry. This may be because he has not much animation about him while preaching, and he fails to get their attention. No one ever listens to Elder Lyon's preaching without being instructed. Elder Lyon is a good writer. He has written many essays and doctrinal articles which have been deemed worthy of publication. He has written much for our denominational papers on various subjects, all of which show him to be a man of profound and varied knowledge. Elder Lyon has had the advantage of seeing and hearing some of the great men in our national councils of half a century back, as well as acquaintance with such leaders in church relations as the Elder Basil Manley, Jesse Hartwell and J. C. Furman, and many other distinguished Baptist ministers. His oldest child and only son, Compere Adolphus, was converted and baptized in early youth. When the exercises at Clinton College, Mississippi, were suspended on account of the war, he returned home, being a student there, and enlisted in the confederate army. He was at the battle of Shiloh. He

served faithfully till about the last month of the war, when he was dragged from his bed of sickness, and most cruelly murdered by federal troops. His comrades swiftly avenged his death. Brother Lyon and wife now reside with their daughter at Tuscumbia, Alabama. He is still willing to do what he can to advance the cause of Christ.

ELDER JOHN R. NESMITH

Was born in Lawrence county, Alabama, October 10, 1828, near what is now called Avoca. He professed faith in Christ in the year 1847; was married to Miss Pamela G. Leigh, on the 14th of August, 1850. She was the daughter of David G. Leigh, and the granddaughter of John Leigh, a Baptist minister. She is a lady of fair education and culture. Elder Nesmith joined the Baptist Church at Bethel in 1852. Being impressed that it was his duty to preach the gospel, he felt the importance of securing an education. He first studied grammar under his wife at home. Leaving home, he worked on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad during the winter of 1852-53. He lived a humble, Christian man, in the very worst of company. Leaving the railroad, he hired himself as a carpenter, near La Grange, Alabama, his object still being to educate himself for the ministry, but in this he concealed his purpose. In 1856, he joined the Masonic Lodge at Leighton. He studied nights and Sundays, being well supplied with books by friends, whose kindness he remembers gratefully—among whom he mentions Dr. G. E. Kumpe, Col. John T. Abernathy, Dr. John S. Napier, Prof. John C. Stephenson and Prof. Edward Goodwin, and most of all President Felix Johnson. The two latter offered him an education free. But he had a family to support, and he could not see how he could go to school five years and take care of them. So he declined the offer. Still concealing his purpose, he tried to educate himself. He prayed long and earnestly for divine guidance and help. The trouble on his heart and mind can only be appreciated by those who have passed through a similar ordeal. The war came. He enlisted

under General P. D. Roddey, and served under Generals S. D. Lee, Buford and Bedford Forest. He became a backslider, being often in camps and in battle like a wild man. He charged through the lines of the enemy twice, all alone. During all of his sinfulness in the war, he never lost faith in his God, but was simply disobedient. He never forgot to pray and trust to his Heavenly Father. The war was over. He came out unhurt by ball or bayonet. Coming home, he took up his Bible to see if he could find salvation for himself without the discharge of known duty; failing to find it, he humbled himself before God, and dedicated himself to the service of Christ and the church. He made known his impressions concerning the ministry to Deacon W. C. Kirby, who moved that the church license him to exercise his gift. This was done at the December meeting of Bethel Church in 1868. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry in August, 1869. The presbytery consisted of Elders R. J. Jennings, Robt. Little and Isaac Bradford. Since his ordination, Elder Nesmith has been actively engaged in the ministry. He has served the following churches as pastor, and perhaps some others: Macedonia, in Franklin, Bethel, Salem, Enon, Harmony, Mt. Zion, Okolona, Gum Spring, in Lawrence county, and Bethlehem and Valley Grove, in Colbert. He was employed by the association, as missionary in 1873 and 1875. He organized the New Friendship Church in Morgan county, and reorganized Valley Grove Church, of which he is now pastor. He served as moderator of the association in 1881. He was elected a member of the legislature of Alabama, from Lawrence county, in 1886. He is a constant student of the Bible. He has a high regard for the opinions of his brethren, yet is unwavering in what he regards as the faith once delivered to the saints—his firmness being esteemed by some as stubbornness, and perhaps making him unpopular. In his ministerial life he has baptized 467 persons. Elder Nesmith is still able to do a large amount of ministerial work. A few years ago his health was not good, but now he seems to be in excellent health. His preaching ability is good, though he lacks method in the preparation of his discourses, which, no doubt, is

owing to the want of early training. His delivery is fair. Brother Nesmith has the ability and zeal to do much good for the Master's cause. And we trust he may be long spared to preach the words of eternal life to the people.

ELDER CHARLES W. CALLAHAN.

This young brother was the son of William Callahan and his wife, Elizabeth Callahan, and was born in Lawrence county, Alabama, near Moulton, in 1851. His father moved to the neighborhood of Decatur previous to the war. His membership and that of his wife, Sister Callahan, was in the Decatur Church. The father died soon after the war. His widow, Sister Callahan, is still living and resides with her son in law, Mr. Jos. Sugars and wife, in Decatur. She is one of the oldest members of the Decatur Church. Elder Charles Callahan joined the Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, in 1866. He was ordained in that church, in 1867, to preach the gospel. He attended Union University, at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, for a while. In 1875, he taught school and preached to Hillsboro and Mt. Pisgah Churches, perhaps others. He preached the introductory sermon at the association in 1876, at Town Creek Church. The next year he removed to Arkansas, and was pastor at Hope, in 1877 and 1878. He then accepted a call to Eureka Springs Baptist Church, what year we do not now remember. He died there in 1884. He was a young man of great promise, and was a very acceptable preacher, improving all the time.

ELDER JACKSON GUNN

Was born September 8, 1823, in Robertson county, Tennessee. He is the son of Anderson and Martha Gunn. His grandfather on his father's side, was Thomas Gunn, of Caswell county, North Carolina, who was a citizen of that colony before it accepted the constitution in 1789, and became one of the States of the United States. His grandfather on his mother's side, was Col. Joseph Robertson, who had in early life lived in North Carolina, but

moved to Tennessee, before it was admitted into the Union, in 1796. The county of Robertson was named for him.

The early life of Elder Gunn was spent on a farm, where he acquired that knowledge and experience, which, in latter years, made him a successful farmer. His religious impressions began at about the age of twelve, such as serious thoughts and a purpose to be religious at some future time. At the age of thirteen, he saw his father die, and listened attentively to his last admonition to "be a good boy and help take care of the mother and six surviving children," which dying request he tried to obey. At the age of fifteen years and one month he professed faith in Christ, viewing him as the only Savior, and as his Lord and individual Savior. Then he realized that his heart was a sea of love, in which a spark of rebellion could not exist. He was baptized by Elder Wm. S. Baldry into the fellowship of Hopewell Baptist Church, Robertson county, Tennessee, where his membership remained for ten years.

At the age of nineteen, he, feeling impressed that it was his duty to preach the gospel, began to make preparation for that work as his life work, and spent the next six years in acquiring an education. He first went to a high grade school, taught by Rev. O. J. Fisk, at Port Royal. From there he went to Georgetown College, Scott county, Kentucky. While at college his health gave way, and he had to seek out-door exercise. He returned to his home, and preached as opportunity offered and his health admitted. In the mean time, he was ordained to the full work of the ministry by authority of Hopewell Church. The presbytery was composed of Wm. S. Baldry, O. S. Morrow and Wm. Baldwin, all of whom were members of Baptist churches. This ordination occurred on the third Sunday in October, 1848. Soon after ordination he came to north Alabama seeking health in its mountain air and mineral waters. After being somewhat restored to health he was called to the care of the following churches: Tuscumbia Church for half of his time, Mt. Pleasant for one-fourth, and Liberty for one-fourth of his time. He entered upon his work with these churches in 1849, and served them four years,

having good success. In January, 1854, he was called to Decatur Church for three-fourths of his time, and Mt. Pisgah one-fourth. He served Decatur Church until 1859, and Mt. Pisgah for twenty years, with wonderful success. He served at different times as pastor of Town Creek, Hopewell, Moulton, Hillsboro, Hartsell, Round Island, in Limestone county, Madison in Madison county, and Tuscumbia and Mt. Pleasant Churches. He was pastor of Pleasant Hill Church, in Morgan county, for ten years and baptized into her fellowship not less than 400 penitent believers. In addition to his pastoral work, Elder Gunn has preached some in the States of Tennessee, Mississippi and Georgia, but the most of his time has been spent in Alabama, and in the Muscle Shoals Association. In 1856, he was the agent for the Baptist Female Institute at Moulton to raise money to pay off indebtedness of that Institution and buy some school equipments. He raised by subscription and cash about \$1725 for this purpose. He served the Muscle Shoals Association as evangelist a portion of the year 1884. He is now engaged in evangelistic work under the auspices of the State Mission Board of the Alabama Baptist State Convention. In 1851 and 1852, Elder Gunn was the clerk of the association. In 1856, he was chosen moderator, and has filled that position for twenty-seven times up to 1890. He is president of the board of ministerial education of the Muscle Shoals Association. It will be seen by this that Brother Gunn has been a busy man, and that he has been highly esteemed by his brethren. Elder Gunn was once persuaded by his personal friends to permit his name to be run as a candidate to represent Morgan county in the State legislature. He reluctantly consented to this, and was elected by a large majority, and served in the session of 1870-71. While he did his work well and satisfactory, yet he himself felt that it was a little coming down from the high and holy calling of the ministry, and has feared that other preachers would follow his example.

Elder Gunn married Miss Elizabeth Ellet, daughter of Deacon Edmund Ellet, of the Tuscumbia Baptist Church, April 3, 1849. They have raised to maturity eight children, seven of whom are now living. Elder Gunn is now

sixty-seven years old, has been preaching forty-one years, and says he can preach two sermons a day through a meeting of thirty days. He has great power of endurance. He is a strong believer in church sovereignty, a converted church membership, religious liberty, immersion as the only water baptism, final perseverance of the saints, and of future rewards and punishments, and that the Bible is the word of God, given to us, as our rule of faith and practice. As a preacher Elder Gunn has great power with his audience. He has a good appearance in the pulpit, has a most excellent voice, strong and loud, and at the same time pathetic in its tone. His language is good, plain and simple, so that the most illiterate can understand him. His sermons are always good, though sometimes he excels himself. Though not generally using notes, he studies his discourses and analyzes his subject before going into the pulpit. He is a good sermonizer, and a ready speaker upon almost any subject.

For several years past Elder Gunn has not had charge of any churches, but has been traveling as an evangelist in several parts of the State. He seems to delight in this kind of work, and we trust is doing much good. Brother Gunn's home is in Morgan county, near the village of Trinity and about five miles west of Decatur. He has a fine farm which he has improved very much. His home affairs, however, now, he leaves to his good wife and an unmarried son to take care of while he travels and preaches.

ELDER W. T. COBBS.

This brother, who is one of the rising young men in the ministry, in the Muscle Shoals Association, was born in Morgan county, Alabama, July 25, 1851. He lived in the neighborhood of his birth, six miles west of Somerville, until he was thirty-two years old. His educational advantages were very limited, and he grew up to manhood with scarcely any education. His parents were poor and unable to give him any education, except that which he received in the free schools, which were taught only a few months in the year.

He made a profession of religion in the summer of 1867 and joined Shoal Creek Church, which was located near his home. He was baptized by that veteran missionary, Elder M. A. Verser, on the 4th Sunday in October, 1867. He married Miss M. F. Spain, January 31, 1873.

In 1877, he was ordained to the deaconship of Shoal Creek Church. He was licensed to preach by that church in August, 1880, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry in that church, August, 1882. He was pastor of New Shiloh Church, Limestone county, and also of Collin's School-house Church, near Falkville, in 1882. In the fall of 1884, he became a beneficiary of the Ministerial Board of Education of the Muscle Shoals Association, and attended the Mountain View High School, near Trinity, Alabama, taught by Elder Jos. Shackelford. He attended this school about three years. While pursuing his studies, he became pastor of Pleasant Hill Church, in 1885, and of Enon, in 1886. In 1888, he became pastor of Danville and Mt. Nebo Churches. He is still pastor of these four churches, and is doing a good work. He is beloved by his people. He is giving his whole time to the ministry.

When he left school, he settled in Danville, Morgan county, because it was nearer his work, where he has a nice comfortable home. Elder Cobbs is a plain practical preacher. He has a good voice and makes a good appearance in the pulpit. He is easy in his manner and does not seem to be embarrassed. He is persuasive and soon gains the attention of his audience. He is earnest in his delivery, and his congregation feel that he means what he says. He has been successful as a pastor, and his churches have grown under his administration. He is constantly improving as a preacher, and is making his way to the front.

We have here another example of the good done by our ministerial board of education. Money given to aid young ministers in securing an education is not wasted by any means. It pays back more than ten-fold. Elder Cobbs' education is limited, even yet. He had to commence at the beginning, when he entered school; but it has helped him very much, and has given him a foundation upon which, by application and study, he can secure

for himself a fair education, which will make him greatly more useful.

ELDER J. B. HUCKABEE.

This brother was connected with the Muscle Shoals Association as its missionary for a few years—the years 1889 and 1890 in the Tennessee Valley.

He was born in Buncombe county, North Carolina, December 1, 1829. His father moved to Habersham county, Georgia, in 1830, and from thence to Carroll county, Georgia, in 1832. There he grew up to manhood. In 1847, in July, he was baptized by Elder P. M. Rice into the fellowship of the Baptist Church in Vilarisoe. He was married on the 20th of September, the same year, to Miss Virginia P. Veazea.

In 1848, he and his father and mother put their letters into a new church called Macedonia, nearer their home. The same year his wife was baptized. In December, 1848, he moved to Russell county, Alabama, near Opelika and was under the pastorate of Elder Reuben Thornton. In 1854, he moved to Macon county, Alabama, and engaged overseeing near Tuskegee, where he became acquainted with Elders Sam Henderson, Jones, Watt and Talliaferro. In December, 1856, he went further south to Pike county and from thence to Lowndes county, Alabama, near Helicon. He united with Helicon Baptist Church, Elder Mathew Bishop, pastor. In September, 1858, he was licensed to preach by this church and preached as opportunity offered refusing ordination until he had work requiring ordination. On the 7th of March, 1862, he was mustered into the service of the Confederate States, as a member of Company K, 37th Alabama Regiment of Infantry. He continued in the service until 1865, performing his duty faithfully as a soldier.

He, during his services as a soldier, kept up his religious life by holding prayer meetings in the army and preaching as occasion presented itself. In 1866, being called to the care of three churches, Mt. Lebanon and Good Hope in Pike county and Philadelphia in Montgomery county, he was ordained on the 2nd Sabbath in January, 1868,

in Olusta Church, Pike county, Alabama, by a presbytery consisting of Elders J. S. Yarborough, pastor, J. J. Macon, and L. C. Culbreth. He was pastor of these three churches with another which he built up, until 1870. In that year he removed to Elyton, Alabama, and after one year moved to the neighborhood of Warrior Station, Jefferson county, where he was pastor of several churches until 1874. On account of the health of his family, he removed to Fayette county, and bought land near where Winfield now is. He became pastor of four churches, and continued in this work until 1880, constituting two churches within that time. Owing to financial embarrassments on account of churches failing to remunerate him according to promise, he engaged in work for Major E. C. Gordon, as traveling agent in his efforts to build the Georgia Pacific railroad, but continued to preach as much as he did while serving churches. In 1887, Brother Huckabee gave himself to the mission work on his own responsibility, traveling over the counties of Fayette, Walker and Winston.

He was offered work by the State Mission Board in 1888 in the same field and accepted it. He worked for this board fifteen months, when he was called into the mission work of the Muscle Shoals Association, to labor in the Tennessee Valley, and labored as the missionary of the association from January, 1889, to October, 1890. Elder Huckabee is a laborious minister and has done much good. His educational advantages were limited and he had many difficulties in preparing himself for the ministry. It was only his ardent desire to be instrumental in saving sinners and to obey what he believed to be the call of his Master, that induced him to enter the work.

His manner as a preacher is earnest and his arguments are taken from the Scriptures, with which he shows great familiarity. He has labored most earnestly and very successfully. He has baptized over 1,000 willing converts, amongst whom were seventeen entire households and not one infant among them. He has been an earnest advocate of ministerial education (feeling the want of it himself) and missions in general; is a strong temperance man, and for twelve years has been a Prohibitionist.

He has been a most useful man to the denomination,

never shunning to preach what he believes to be the doctrines of the New Testament.

He is now, somewhat advanced in life, being sixty-one years old. We trust he may be spared many years to do battle for the Master's cause.

ELDER MIKE FINNEY.

This brother, who has long been connected with Muscle Shoals Association, was born in Lawrence county, Alabama, December 15, 1825. He professed faith in Christ and joined Bethel Church, in the same county, in September, 1842, and was baptized by Elder John L. Townes. He was licensed to preach the gospel of Christ by the same church, in August, 1851, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry in Bethel Church, in 1852. Elders T. S. Carson and George D. Russell, acting as a presbytery. Elder Finney, to better prepare himself for his ministerial work, attended Union University at Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Dr. Jos. Eaton was president at the time. He also attended La Grange College. He has been pastor of the following churches from time to time: Bethel, in 1853, Cherry Hill, Mt. Nebo, Evening Shade and Macedonia, Franklin county—of the latter he has been pastor a number of years, and is still its pastor. Brother Finney lives on a farm near Newburg, Alabama, and looks to the farm and teaching school for a support, rather than to the churches, which pay but little. Elder Finney is a very acceptable preacher, and if he had consecrated himself to this work, when he first began preaching, his success would have been much greater than it has been, but he has been cramped by financial embarrassments, which have made it necessary, as he thought, to give his time and attention to secular affairs, though he has preached more or less all the time, and though now sixty-five years old, he says, "I am still in the ministry, and expect to be 'till I am dead."

Rev. Finney has been married twice. The first time he married Miss Martha J. Ash. She died very soon, leaving no children. His second wife was Mrs. Martha J. Grubbs. He has two children by his last wife, both daughters, and

members of the Baptist Church. One of these daughters, now Mrs. Henley, is an enthusiastic worker in the church, and a lovely woman. Brother Finney has had, like many other Baptist preachers, rather a hard and checkered life, and perhaps, like some, he has at times strayed from his Master's fold, and as a result, he has suffered for it. We trust that his last days may be his best days, and we know they will, if he lives close to the cross. He lives in Colbert county, near Newburg.

ELDER W. B. CARTER.

This brother, who is one of the younger ministers of the Muscle Shoals Association, was born in Morgan county, Alabama, near Decatur, September 3, 1842, where he has lived all his life up to two years ago, when he was called to his present field of labor, Phoenix City, Alabama. He was the only son of the well known and much beloved Jesse A. and Susan K. Carter, who lived in the same neighborhood for a half century. Both are now dead. He has one sister, Mrs. Mollie Hughes, wife of our Brother George H. Hughes of Flint.

He professed faith in Christ in his thirteenth year, and was baptized by Jackson Gunn into the fellowship of Mt. Pisgah Church, near Flint, Morgan county, Alabama, on the 22nd of July, 1855, where he remained a member thirty-three years, when he drew his letter to join the church at Phoenix City. He was a lay preacher several years before he was ordained. In August, 1873, he was ordained to the full work of the ministry at Mt. Pisgah, by a presbytery consisting of Elders J. Gunn and W. W. Wilhite. He has been pastor of the following churches in this association for the time specified: Mt. Nebo, twelve years; Friendship, three years; Pleasant Hill, two years; New Friendship, two years; Shilo, one year; Gum Spring, four years; Shoal Creek, seven years; Bethel, five years; Hartsell, three years. These churches were all in Morgan county except Friendship. He has also been pastor of Cullman Church, Mt. Pleasant and Mt. Stanley Churches in Lawrence county, and Poplar Hill in Giles county, Tennessee. He served his own

church, Mt. Pisgah, ten years. He is now pastor of a church at Phoenix City, Alabama, opposite Columbus, Georgia, where he has been two years. Brother Carter was elected moderator of the association in 1884, at its session at Hillsboro.

Brother Carter's early advantages for securing an education were poor. He attended school some, but not to any great extent. He was a confederate soldier through the war, and when it closed, he had something else to do than to go to school. He entered upon the ministry therefore, under embarrassing circumstances. He persevered, however, and tried the best he knew how to fit himself for the work. His life as a minister has been a hard one. He has been very busy giving to his people his best talent and energies. His churches have been generally blessed under his labors, and he has baptized quite a large number of converts for so young a preacher. His whole soul seems to be in the work. He has given up everything in order that he may preach the gospel. Like many other men, Brother Carter has not escaped the venomous tongue of slander. He has had a great burden to bear in this respect, but his church stood bravely by him in his troubles, and he came out of the fiery ordeal triumphant over his enemies.

Elder Carter is an earnest and instructive preacher. He presents a good appearance in the pulpit, his voice is pleasant and his whole manner attractive. He has overcome many of his earlier faults. His language has improved very much, yet his want of early training, in grammar especially, may be plainly noted. He seems to have a good knowledge of the Scriptures, and expresses himself with great ease.

Elder Carter was married in early life to Miss Mary A. Woodall, daughter of Mr. James A. Woodall, a well known Methodist minister of Morgan county, Alabama. His wife was a Methodist, but became a Baptist by the study of the New Testament. They have had seven sons, but only two of them are now living. We trust our dear brother may be blessed with long life, and that he may continue to cry aloud on the walls of Zion. We close with an extract from a letter addressed to us by

this good brother: "I am so thankful that the mother of my boys is a Christian woman. I have for years given myself wholly to the preaching of the blessed gospel of my Lord, for the excellency of the knowledge of whom, I count all things loss, of an earthly character. Having turned my back on everything that is dear to the natural man, or to the carnal mind, save my wife and two boys, the expectation of fee or hope of reward is beyond the river of death, where I hope to hold Him by the feet, and praise Him forevermore, who saved me by His death."

ELDER ROBERT T. WEAR.

This brother is one of the most earnest and consecrated ministers in the Muscle Shoals Association. He is the son of Gilbert N. and Angeline Wear, and was born near Mt. Hope, in Lawrence county, Alabama, September 12, 1846. His parents were born and raised in east Tennessee. They came to Morgan county, Alabama, in the fall of 1832, where they remained a few months, then removed and settled in Lawrence county. His first religious impressions were received at the age of eight or nine years. Alternating between hope and fear, he lived most miserable. In this condition he united with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, at Concord, Alabama, only to be excluded in a short time. We will give Brother Wear's own account of his conversion and joining the Baptist Church: "About the year 1863, in July, I was at home on a furlough, and attending a Cumberland Presbyterian meeting, at Rock Spring Church. I was brought to realize my acceptance with God through Christ. Going back to the army, I soon left my first love and wandered far off into sin and great wickedness. In this condition, with only now and then a gleam of light into my poor darkened heart, which caused me at times great remorse of conscience, I remained until the spring of 1868, when I began to read the New Testament and pray most earnestly for the pardon of my sins. I was too poor then to have even a tallow candle, so I learned my first lessons of God's truth by fire light made by pieces of boards and

splinters from the fence, and after plowing all day. In the month of August or September, 1868, God restored unto me the joys of His salvation. Feeling that it was my duty to unite again with the church, I went to D. C. Kennard, then pastor of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church at Concord, and told him my desire, and that I also wished to be immersed. He replied by saying I had been baptized, and therefore, according to the confession of faith, he could not immerse me. I said to him, I have been reading the New Testament for myself, and am convinced that nothing but immersion in water is baptism. But he refused to baptize me. Then began in my mind that course of reasoning, which, false as it is, has lulled many a conscience to rest, that was awakened by God's truth. I reasoned thus: baptism is not essential to salvation; many good people were never baptized, and yet have gone to heaven. My father and my sainted mother in heaven were Presbyterians, and all that is near and dear to me on earth identifies me with the C. P. Church. Notwithstanding the dark miserable hours I had spent weeping over sins of disobedience, and though I saw the way in the light of the New Testament, I suffered my love for relations and friends to keep me from obeying my Savior, and again I fell back into my old habit of sin, to a great extent. But thanks be to God, He did not leave nor forsake me.

In August, 1869, my wife, who was a daughter of W. K. Wallace, of Moulton, Alabama, and to whom I had been married nearly four years, and who had never made any pretensions to Christianity, while I was absent, went with her uncle, J. A. Dukeminier to Town Creek Baptist Church, and under the preaching of the much loved J. C. Roberts, she was convicted of sin, and went forward for prayer. When I heard this at night, my soul was stirred within me, and the next day I went with her to the meeting. Up to this time, it never occurred to me that I was a Baptist in faith, though I was far from being at ease, in my conscience. I sought an interview with Brother Roberts, telling him I was troubled, and would like to know what Baptists believed. Though raised within one and one-half miles of this church,

I don't remember to have ever been there at a protracted meeting before.

This godly man began telling me the doctrines believed and practiced by Baptists and I could but say yes, that is true, for I have read it for myself in the New Testament. So I realized for the first time, I was a Baptist in sentiment, hence, I united at once with that church. My wife, during the week found Jesus precious by believing, and on the third Sunday in August, 1869, we were both buried with Christ by baptism into death. I was called on during the meeting by the sainted J. L. Lattimore, and made my first effort in public prayer. I had told him privately I would not lead in prayer, yet when he called, I did not think of trying to excuse myself. Not one thing could I ever remember of that prayer, except that I offered it in the name of Jesus."

Elder Wear was licensed by Town Creek Church to preach about the year of 1871. Giving evidence that God had called him to the work of the ministry, that church had him ordained in November, 1872. Elders J. L. Lattimore and J. C. Roberts constituted the presbytery. Elder J. M. Roberts was ordained at the same time. Elder Wear's first pastorate was at Town Creek Church in about 1875 or 1876. He has served that church ever since, except about three years. He was pastor of Russellville Church about fourteen years. He has also been pastor of the following churches at various times: Russell Valley, Okolona, Enon, Hopewell, Moulton, Mt. Pleasant, Mt. Hope and Mt. Nebo. Elder Wear now has charge of the two latter churches, and of Town Creek. The preaching abilities of Elder Wear are good. He has been a close student of the Bible. He is earnest and zealous. He gains the attention of his audience, because they see that he feels what he says. His earnest and pathetic exhortations affect his hearers deeply. He has wonderfully improved as a preacher within the last five years. His sermons are never long, but they are to the point, well prepared, and earnestly delivered.

Elder Wear has been twice married. His second wife, was Miss Mittie Shoemaker, daughter of Deacon J. Y. Shoemaker, deceased, of Moulton, a most estimable lady,

and one who, we have no doubt, is making our brother a most excellent helpmate. Elder Wear now resides on his farm in Lawrence county, about five or six miles from the village of Mt. Hope.

ELDER JOHN D. McCLANAHAN,

The son of Alexander, and Serena M. McClanahan, was born in Morgan county, Alabama, January 27, 1844. His grandfather, Alexander McClanahan was a Virginian, and was a soldier in the revolutionary war. Brother McClanahan was converted in September, 1867, and was baptized into the fellowship of Shoal Creek Church, in October, 1867, by Elder M. A. Verser. He was a member of that church about three years, when he drew his letter to go into the organization of Bethel Church, near Hartsell, in 1872. He was one of the constituent members of that church. He was its clerk for two years, and afterwards was ordained a deacon. He served two years as deacon, when he was licensed by the church to preach. He exercised his gift two years, and the church then called him to ordination. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry in 1878. Elders W. B. Carter and J. N. Thompson constituted the presbytery. In 1879, he organized Macedonia Church, Morgan county, and was called as its pastor and served the church six years. This was his first pastorate. The following are the churches that Brother McClanahan has served as pastor: Flint River, two years; Gum Spring, in Morgan county, five years; Lebanon, ten years, and is still its pastor; White Plains Church, in Blount county, two years; Bethel, in Morgan county, one year; Hopewell, five years, and is still its pastor; Shoal Creek, one year; Cave Spring and Shady Grove. The last two he has preached to as missionary of the association, in which work he engaged in 1890. Elder McClanahan assisted in organizing the church in East Decatur, in 1889. Brother McClanahan has been very active since he entered upon the ministry. He is a carpenter by trade and has supported himself and family by his daily labor at his trade, yet he has continued to preach the gospel, and has supplied churches most of the

time. He now preaches to five churches. Elder McClanahan was married in 1867 to Mary Ann, the oldest daughter of Deacon G. W. Tapscott. They have had nine children, five of whom are living. As a preacher, Elder McClanahan is sound in doctrine, earnest and zealous. He talks rather fast and seems to be at no loss for words to express his thought. He labors under the same disadvantage that many of our preachers do—his early education was limited. He had no training in elocution or grammar. He was a soldier in the confederate army, at a time when he might have been going to school. As it is, however, he has done wonderfully well, considering his opportunities for culture. His sermons are practical and in a line with the Bible, which he has made his study. His success in winning souls to Christ has been great and his churches have been built up.

ELDER THOMAS R. BRAGG

Was born in Spartanburgh, South Carolina, October 21, 1837. When he was five years old, his brother with whom he was living, settled in Franklin county, Alabama, twenty-seven miles west of Russellville. In August, 1850, he professed religion, and was baptized by Elder Wm. Mathews, into the fellowship of Harmony Church, a member of the Big Bear Creek Association. In 1866, he was married to Miss Elizabeth Gasley, of Vienna, Illinois. In 1868, he moved to Lawrence county, Alabama, and became one of the constituent members of Harmony Church, which is situated five miles from Moulton, on the Hillsboro road.

He had, from his youth, felt deeply the duty and desire to preach the gospel to lost sinners, but a sense of his unworthiness caused him to delay entering upon this work for years. When he was enabled to realize that the sufficiency was of God, and not of man, he became willing to follow where the spirit led. The church at Harmony called a presbytery consisting of Elders J. C. Roberts, J. P. Bragg and J. M. Roberts, who ordained him to the full work of the ministry, June 18, 1875. Soon after his ordination he was called to the care of Harmony, Pleas-

ant Grove and Smyrna Churches, which churches he served until the fall of 1877, when he removed to Texas, locating in the town of Bells, Grayson county. Here he found a few Baptists whom he constituted into a church, assisted by Elders Reed, of Texas, and Fore of Mississippi. He was pastor of this church for two years. He resided in Texas ten years and was pastor of several churches. He returned to Moulton, Alabama, in the winter of 1887-88, and became pastor of Harmony and Pleasant Grove Churches and served until 1889, when he resigned Harmony Church. Brother Bragg is still preaching to Pleasant Grove Church, and did some missionary work for the association in 1890. He was also called to the Moulton Church, in the fall of 1890. He had not preached at Moulton but a few times, when the Campbellites were aroused and proposed a discussion, and selected G. R. Sewell of Nashville, to represent them. The discussion began December 16, 1890, and was to continue four days. Elder Bragg was in the affirmative the first two days, and showed by scripture and historic facts, that the missionary Baptist Churches were the churches of Christ. Elder Sewell then commenced in the affirmative, but was pressed so closely by his opponent that on the evening of his first day he closed his remarks and left next morning leaving every Baptist with a smiling face. Elder Bragg is well versed in the Scriptures and understands fully and clearly the arguments in favor of Baptist doctrines. His preaching is generally well received, though, on account of its controversial character, it is calculated to drive away those who disagree with him on some points.

ELDER JOHN SPEER

Who is one of the young ministers of the association, was born in that part of Franklin county, now called Colbert, September 1, 1857. While yet a child, his father was reduced to poverty by the calamities of the Civil War, he did not recover from it, and died soon after the war. The death of his father cast a great shadow upon his young life. He was devoted to him. At the age of seventeen he joined

Okolona Church, Lawrence county, Alabama. His greatest desire now was to glorify God, in doing His will, whatever that might be. He felt it to be his duty to preach the gospel, though ill prepared in the way of an education, as he had scarcely any. He was ordained to the gospel ministry in Okolona Church, August 15, 1881, by a presbytery consisting of J. J. Stamps, W. C. Summers, Isaac Bradford and J. R. Nesmith, and was called to the pastorate of that church. Being called upon to teach others, he felt the importance of acquiring at least a common school education, for he did not have even that. Here was a crisis in his life: to attend school, and at the same time provide for a young wife and a widowed mother, was a question not easily decided, in his circumstances. At this time the Muscle Shoals Association was aiding worthy young men, who were trying to prepare themselves for the ministry. Brother Speer was aided by the Board of Ministerial Education of the Association to attend school. He entered Mountain View High School, near Trinity, Alabama, taught by Elder Josephus Shackelford, in January, 1883, and continued there until May 30, 1884, fourteen and a half months. He again entered that school as a beneficiary of the board in 1887 and remained four months. During the time he was attending school he did some pastoral work and in vacations, worked for the association as a missionary, thus he was enabled, by practicing strict economy and self-denial to support himself and family. After quitting school he became pastor of Mt. Pisgah Church, and afterwards of Macedonia and East Decatur Churches. He is now employed as a missionary, and is preaching to Liberty, Mission Grove and Mt. Stanley Churches. Elder Speer is an earnest and zealous preacher, and is trying by closely applying himself to the Bible and such books as he can procure, to better prepare himself for usefulness as a preacher. He has improved very much within the last five years, both in the manner of his delivery and in the preparation of his sermons. His voice is not very strong, and is rather shrill. His great fault in delivery is, that he permits himself to become too much excited, and his voice is raised to such a pitch, that its sharpness is annoying to his hearers. He can overcome this by constant effort to

suppress undue excitement. He has in these latter years improved some in this direction.

Elder Speer was married at the age of nineteen to Miss Bracken, daughter of Wm. Bracken, and now has four children. He is living near Trinity, Morgan county, Alabama.

ELDER JAMES I. STOCKTON.

This brother was born, October 19, 1847, in Lawrence county, Alabama, near Mt. Hope. He professed faith in Christ in the summer of 1864. His father being a Presbyterian and his mother a Baptist, he remained out of the church three years, reading no book or paper except the New Testament. Finally he became convinced as to his duty, and joined the Town Creek Baptist Church, and was baptized by its pastor, Elder J. C. Roberts. He was licensed to preach by this church, on the 13th of July, 1872, and ordained in the same church, July 12, 1874. The presbytery consisted of Elders J. C. Roberts, R. T. Wear, J. S. Gibson, and J. L. Lattimore. Since that time, Elder Stockton has served as pastor the following churches: Salem, Liberty, Mission Grove, Harmony, all in Lawrence county, and Pleasant Hill, Bethel, Shoal Creek and Somerville, in Morgan county. He has also served Madison, Round Island, in the Liberty Association. He is now pastor at Athens, Round Island, and Poplar Creek, all of his time being employed. He has recently removed to Athens, with his family, from Hartsell, where he lived for a number of years. Elder Stockton served for three years, as missionary of the Muscle Shoals Association. He had quite a hard field, the Tennessee Valley, but did some good work.

Brother Stockton was married to Miss Ellen Simpson, near Decatur, Alabama, December 10, 1876. They have three children living, and have lost three.

At the session of the association at Pleasant Hill Church, in 1880, Elder Stockton was elected clerk.

As a preacher Elder Stockton stands very fair. He has a good voice and a good delivery, and the matter of his sermons show thought. He is a good sermonizer, consid-

ering the advantages he has had. He uses good language, and is earnest in his delivery. Elder Stockton makes use of all the opportunities afforded him, to improve himself as a minister. He is young and we have no doubt will take his place among the first ministers of north Alabama, if he consecrates himself to the work, and applies himself.

ELDER HENRY J. HALBROOKS.

This is another one of the rising young ministers of the Muscle Shoals Association. Elder Halbrooks was born in Morgan county, Alabama, January 14, 1857. His father and mother were James and Susan Halbrooks. His grandfather on his father's side was Jefferson Halbrooks, and on his mother's side, Harry Livingstone. He professed faith in Christ when he was about twelve years old, and joined Shoal Creek Church, and was baptized by Elder M. A. Verser. He began preaching in 1882. He was called to the care of New Friendship Church, in February, 1883, which church petitioned Shoal Creek Church to have him ordained. The church licensed him to preach, so that he might give an exhibition of his gift, and soon after this, he was called to ordination, and ordained on the 23rd of June, 1883.

The presbytery consisted of Elders W. B. Carter, W. T. Cobbs and W. G. W. Smith. He continued his work with the New Friendship Church for two years. In March, 1886, he was called to the care of Poplar Hill Church, Giles county, Tennessee. He is still the pastor of that church. In 1886, he became the pastor of Shoal Creek Church and served it two years. In June, 1887, he entered school at Hartsell, as a beneficiary of the Board of Ministerial Education of the Muscle Shoals Association. He continued in school two and a half years. His education was thus greatly improved, and he was much better prepared for his ministerial work. He was called as pastor to the church at Hartsell, in 1889, and is their pastor now.

Brother Halbrooks is married and resides in Hartsell, Alabama. Elder Halbrooks stands above the average among the young preachers of our association. He is stu-

diously inclined, and is constantly improving, as we are told by those who have been acquainted with his preaching for several years back. He uses good language, and delivers his sermons with ease and energy. The church at Hartsell is a good judge of preaching, and their retaining Brother Halbrooks as their pastor is a good index of his preaching ability. We look upon him as one of the rising ministers of the Muscle Shoals Association.

ELDER JOSEPHUS SHACKELFORD

Was born in Portsmouth, Virginia, February 6, 1830, and was the seventh son of Satterwhite and Courtney Ann Shackelford. In 1835, his father removed to the town of Pontotoc, Pontotoc county, Mississippi, then a new town, and where the land office for the sale of the lands of the Chickasaw session was located. At that time the Indians were still there, not having been removed to the Indian Territory. His early education was much neglected, sometimes for the want of schools and sometimes for the want of money. He had obtained, however, a tolerably good English education, when the war with Mexico commenced, in 1846. In 1847, he became very anxious to become a soldier. Two of his elder brothers had been to Mexico, one in Jefferson Davis's regiment of Mississippi Volunteers, and one with Col. Campbell's regiment of Tennesseans. The first was in the battles of Monterey and Buena Vista, and the latter at Cerro Gordo and the city of Mexico. His older brother Richard had returned, as the Mississippi regiment had enlisted only for a year. His brother William remained in the city of Mexico sometime after his discharge, but finally returned home to die, having contracted that terrible disease that killed so many of the soldiers in Mexico, chronic diarrhea. The parents of the subject of this sketch were unwilling for their son to enlist in the army to go to Mexico, and besides, he was under age, being only seventeen. In defiance of their wishes and commands, he ran away from home and joined a company, commanded by Capt. John F. Wray. He has ever regretted this step. He saw, when it was too late, how wrong it was to disobey his parents. He joined the com-

mand at Vicksburg, Mississippi, and was mustered into the service of the United States. His father wrote to the officer who mustered in the soldiers, forbidding him to muster his son into the service, as he was under age. The officer, however, paid no attention to it, except to tell young Shackelford that he had received such a letter, but as he thought he was large and stout, and would make a good soldier, he would muster him in. On his way to Vicksburg, the boat he was on met the boat on which his brother William was returning home from Mexico, broken down in health. He did not know this, however, until sometime after, when he received a letter from his brother William beseeching him to return home. In this letter his brother told him of some of the hardships of a soldier's life, and tried to induce him to retrace his steps. It was too late, however, the die was cast. He had determined to go on. He never met that brother again. In a few months he died, in Memphis, Tennessee, where he had gone for medical treatment. Young Shackelford went on to Mexico. His company with some others formed the Mississippi Battalion, commanded by Col. Patton Anderson. He was a corporal in his company. He landed in Tampico, Mexico, in January, 1848. The war, however, was about over, and he had no duty to perform except guard duty and military drill. In June, 1848, he returned from Mexico and reached home in July of that year in wretched health. For several months it was thought that he would never recover, but he gradually began to mend, and in the early part of 1849, he was fully restored to health. He professed faith in Christ in 1849, and joined the Baptist Church at Pontotoc. His father also, at the same meeting in which his son was converted, professed faith in Christ, and joined the church at the same time, and both were baptized by Elder Martin Ball. Very soon after he joined the church, young Shackelford had impressions that it was his duty to preach the gospel. He had formed the resolution, previous to his conversion, of becoming a lawyer, but this idea was banished from his mind, and he resolved that he would give his life to the Lord's work. The trouble was, however, that he did not think his education was sufficient.

He could not think of entering upon such a work, without a better education than he had. He was a fair English scholar, but he wanted to be better informed, and to know something about the languages in which the Scriptures were written. How to obtain this was the all absorbing question in his mind. His father had but little means and was not able to give him a collegiate education. He determined to go to work and make the means for at least one year's expenses. So he went to making cotton, and through the kindness of a friend in loaning him money, and the help of the Baptist Educational Society of Georgia, he was able to enter Mercer University, then at Penfield, Georgia, in the winter of 1850-51, where he remained four and one-half years, and graduated from that institution in July, 1855. He was ordained in the Baptist Church, Pontotoc, Mississippi, in August, 1855. The presbytery consisted of Elders W. L. Slack, Martin Ball, —Pitts and Joshua Smith. Before leaving college, he had made an engagement with the first Baptist Church of Memphis, Tennessee, through its pastor, Rev. C. R. Hendrickson, to take charge of a mission station in that city. He went there in August, 1855, but found the church in a disorganized condition, so far as mission work was concerned. Its pastor seemed to have come under the condemnation of some of the members of the church, because he had seen fit to marry, his first wife having died only a few months before his second marriage, leaving some helpless children. He married for his second wife a most excellent lady, who was a member of the church, and a widow. The church was divided in opinion, and right or wrong, some condemned their pastor. The result was, the pastor was in trouble. The subject of the mission work was laid aside. In addition to this the yellow fever made its appearance, and people were dying every day. Elder Shackelford saw that his hopes of entering at once on permanent ministerial work, if dependent on the first Baptist Church of Memphis, was blasted. He received about enough, while in Memphis, and he remained there about two or three months, to pay his board. He turned his attention to securing a situation as teacher and preacher. This was necessary, as he had just married, and must be

doing something to sustain himself and wife. Just at this time he noticed in the *Tennessee Baptist* an advertisement for a teacher to take charge of the Baptist Female Institute, at Moulton, Alabama. He applied for the position, and was elected. In January, 1856, he took charge of that school. He was also called to be pastor of the Moulton Baptist Church, which he accepted. He remained principal of the school until the war broke it up in 1862, with the exception of one year.

During all this time he was pastor of the Moulton Church. He was also pastor of several other churches, namely, Courtland, Liberty and Mt. Pleasant. The school was in a most flourishing condition at the commencement of the Civil War. In the fall of 1862, Elder Shackelford was earnestly urged by some of his personal friends to take charge of a company of cavalry as captain. He consented. His company was in Col. Wm. Johnson's regiment, Roddy's Brigade. He resigned after serving one year, and became chaplain of the regiment, seeing little prospect of doing good in that capacity, he resigned, and returned home, and entered into the school room again and preached to several churches, Town Creek, Moulton and Mt. Pleasant.

In 1865, just after the war closed, in connection with Major D. C. White, of Moulton, Alabama, he commenced the publication of a Baptist weekly newspaper called the *Christian Herald*. He had to get permission from the federal authorities at Decatur, to publish this paper. When the first number was issued, there were no mail facilities at all. The paper had to be sent by hand to the subscribers. The first number was issued, we believe, on the 18th of July, 1865. He continued the publication of this paper in Moulton until 1867, when it was removed to Tuscumbia, Alabama, parties there buying out the interest of Major White. The paper was finally removed to Nashville, Tennessee, where it was published until sold to J. J. Toon of the *Christian Index*, Atlanta, Georgia. Elders J. M. D. Cates, T. T. Eaton, J. M. Phillips and Brother A. B. Cates were connected with this paper as editors and proprietors at different times, with Elder Shackelford. During the publication of the paper,

Elder Shackelford spent much of his time in traveling in its interest, in Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi. He also preached to some churches. During the time the *Christian Herald* was published in Tuscumbia, he also published a secular paper, *The Tuscumbia Times*, which was afterwards absorbed by the *North Alabamian*, which paper he bought. He continued the publication of the *North Alabamian* until 1875, when he sold it and his printing office to Captain A. W. Keller, who is still publishing that paper. During most of the time he resided in Tuscumbia, about ten years, he was pastor of the Baptist Church there. It was a very weak body, and did not grow much as the town itself was at a standstill for about ten or fifteen years. He also taught the Male Academy at Tuscumbia, about two years.

In 1876, Elder Shackelford received a call to Forest City, Arkansas, to take charge of the Baptist Church there, and also of a school. He removed to that place in December, 1876. He remained there until January, 1879, when on account of his impaired health and that of his family he returned to Alabama, and settled where he now lives, one mile south of Trinity, Morgan county, Alabama. He opened, in January, 1879, a select school, called the Mountain View High School, which he taught, with the exception of one year, until June, 1889.

In 1886, he became associate editor of the *Alabama Baptist*, and continued with that paper about one year, when he resumed his school at Mountain View again. In the fall of 1889, he took charge of a school at Leighton, Alabama, which he taught until the close of 1890. In 1882, he was, without his solicitation, nominated and elected to the legislature of Alabama, from Morgan county, by the democratic party. He served one term and tried to do his duty. He has never held any other civil office. During all the years he was connected with the press and in the army and in the legislature, he has never ceased preaching, whether he was pastor or not. In the thirty-five years of his ministerial life, he has spent very few Sabbaths without preaching somewhere. He is now pastor of Hillsboro Church, which he has been serving for more than eleven years. He has no other charge.

In 1876, he served the State Mission Board as evangelist for north Alabama, for a short time.

Elder Shackelford was married at Penfield, Georgia, June 18, 1855, to Miss Ann Cordelia Stow. Eight children have been born to them, seven of whom are living. One son and six daughters. The son is married, and two of the daughters. Elder Shackelford's manner of preaching is plain and practical, and rather of the argumentative style. His great regret, as he looks back over his past life, is that he never applied himself more to pastoral work, he was prevented from doing this by his engaging in school teaching. Perhaps had he trusted God more, and made more sacrifices for His cause, he would have done better.

ELDER SAMUEL MCGAUGHY STEENSON.

Samuel

This brother was born in ~~Morgan~~ county, Alabama, near Mt. Hope, May 16, 1824, and died at the home of his son, A. L. Steenson, Colbert county, Alabama, June 1, 1887. He was married to Miss Ann Eliza Turner, at La Grange, Alabama, November 12, 1850. His widow, two sons and a daughter survive him. Brother Steenson professed religion July, 1864, and joined Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church. He was ordained to the gospel ministry in the same church in December, 1866. The presbytery consisted of Elders Jos. Shackelford and J. F. Shaw. Brother Steenson was the pastor of several churches. His first pastorate we believe was Mt. Moriah which he served about three years from 1869 to 1871, inclusive. He was also pastor of Valley Grove, Mission Grove, Liberty and Okolona Churches. He was elected clerk of the circuit court of Colbert county, and served in that capacity until his death, having been twice elected to that office. His death was announced to the association in 1887 and we find the following in the report of the committee on deceased ministers concerning him: "Your committee on deceased ministers feel sad to report the death of Brother Samuel M. Steenson which occurred since our last associational meeting. His long standing with us, as one bold to declare the doctrines of the Bible,

causes us to cherish the memory of his commendable virtues."

Elder Steenson, previous to his conversion, took very little interest in religious matters. He was a lover of the world and of sin, and very profane. When he joined the church, his mind was turned in another direction and his desire was to live better and to do what he could for his Master's cause. He had many temptations to encounter and it was hard for him to overcome the evil habits contracted in youth. It was a battle with him all the time. He preached with earnestness, and was a good worker in the church. His education was not such as to fit him for public speaking, and commencing so late in life as a public speaker, he labored under many disadvantages. Towards the close of his life, he preached but seldom. We believe, that while living at Tuscumbia, he preached to the church at Cherokee for a while. He died in faith. He was a soldier in the confederate army, and for a great deal of his time was detailed as a nurse in the hospital, as he was a most excellent nurse, and seemed to be naturally fitted for that important and responsible position.

ELDER M. A. VERSER.

This beloved brother was born in North Carolina, December 28, 1811, and died at his home in Marshall county, Alabama, May 2, 1878. He came to Alabama when eight years old. He professed faith in Christ at the age of fifteen, and connected himself with the Methodist Church. He remained with that people about fifteen years, when he became dissatisfied on account of infant baptism which he could not endorse as scriptural and joined the Missionary Baptist Church. He was ordained at Fowler's Cove Church in 1847. We have not been able to find out the presbytery that ordained him. His membership, in 1853, was at Salem Church, Morgan county, as he was a delegate from that church that year, to the association. He was pastor of that church at that time, and also of old Blue Springs and Shilo Churches, and continued for several years. He was pastor of Shoal Creek Church in 1857, and

remained its pastor several years. He also served Concord and Bethlehem Churches. In 1860 or 1861, he became a member of Mt. Tabor Church, in Marshall county, and remained a member of that church until his death. Brother Verser was a missionary of the Muscle Shoals Association for many years. He entered upon this work in 1858, as missionary of the third district, and continued in that work until his death, with the exception of a year or two during the war. He did much to advance the cause of Christ, wherever he traveled.

He was an unlearned man, had very few advantages, was poor, yet he gave himself to the work of the Lord, and did what he could. He was highly esteemed by all who knew him as a pious, godly man, and preached with great acceptance.

He was twice married. His first wife was Ereny Reece, to whom he was married September 9, 1830. His second wife was Amanda Brown, to whom he was married October 1, 1849. She is still living.

To show the esteem in which Elder Verser was held by his brethern, we give the report adopted by the association in 1878 concerning his death—"It is our painful duty to report that Brother M. A. Verser, our trusted and tried missionary, who has proclaimed life and salvation to dying people in almost every mountain and valley in the association, and who has so long profitably met with us, will meet with us no more here. We all knew him, and to know him was to love him. He has gone to the final association, not to draw a part of the scanty funds of the Muscle Shoals Association, but to hear the welcome plaudit of the great Moderator, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of thy Lord.'"

The association appointed Elder J. Gunn to deliver a sermon in memory of Brother Verser at the next association. Brother Gunn performed the service at Bethel Church, Lawrence county, to a large audience, composed of members of the association and citizens of the Bethel neighborhood.

ELDER JOHN M. CUMMINGS.

Brother Cummings was born in east Tennessee, near

Chattanooga, May 9, 1805, and died in Moulton, Alabama, October, 1847. He was married twice. His first wife was Miss Martha H. Lusk, to whom he was married May 6, 1824. On February 19, 1835, he was married to Matilda W. Devault. She is now living and is eighty years old. She has three daughters living, all married, with quite a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We had the pleasure of meeting this sister recently, at her grandson's, Mr. Claude King, of Leighton, Alabama. She was looking very well and stout, for one of her age.

Elder Cummings was a member of Enon Church, Lawrence county, Alabama, for a number of years. When he joined, we have not been able to find out, but he was licensed by that church in 1840, to preach the gospel. He was a delegate from that church to the association in 1840. He was, soon after this, ordained in the same church. In 1844, he preached the introductory sermon at the session of the association for that year. In 1846, the year of the division between the missionaries and the anti-missionaries, he wrote the circular letter, the subject being "Missions." It was a well written paper, and proved very clearly that the Church of Christ was a missionary body. He rode as missionary for a while. We think he was employed by the Muscle Shoals Missionary Society, as the association had no missionaries until 1847, after the division. He and Brother Enoch Windes traveled together on this work. Elder Cummings was pastor of Salem Church for a while, and perhaps some others. His ministerial life was short, only about seven years, though in that time, he made a good reputation as a minister, and gave promise of becoming a useful minister of the gospel, but he was cut down in the prime of life and entered upon his reward.

ELDER S. R. C. ADAMS.

This brother was born near Dalton, Georgia, June 18, 1849. He became a member of Swamp Creek Church, in the same State, in September, 1865, and was baptized by Elder G. W. Selvedge, in October, 1865. He was married to Miss Nannie C. Mitchell, March 22, 1870. He joined Pleasant Hill Church, on his removal to Alabama, and

was ordained in that church, to the gospel ministry, August 10, 1875. Elders J. Gunn and James I. Stockton constituted the presbytery.

Brother Adams' school advantages were poor, he had little or no education. He has made up for this by hard study, especially of the Bible. His excellent memory has aided him very much in retaining whatever he has read. He has a knowledge of the Scriptures which is wonderful, and with the command of language which he possesses, enables him to be very effective as a preacher.

Soon after he was ordained, he was called to the pastorate of New Friendship Church, Morgan county, in 1876, and served it a year or two. He was pastor of Lebanon and Mt. Zion Churches, in Morgan county in 1879 and 1880. In 1880, he was employed by the Executive Board of the association, as a missionary. In 1882, he worked as a missionary again and continued two years, during that time, he also served Enon Church as pastor. Brother Adams removed his membership from Pleasant Hill Church to Mt. Pisgah, and afterwards to Enon, and continued a member of the latter church, until the church at Danville was organized, of which he was one of the constituent members. He was pastor at various times of the following churches in addition to the ones already mentioned: Hopewell, Blue Springs, Friendship, Mt. Nebo, Town Creek, Danville and Warrior, while living in the Muscle Shoals Association. In 1887, we believe he removed from Danville where he had been living for several years, to Woodlawn, in Jefferson county, Alabama. He became pastor of Woodlawn, Pratt Mines, Trussville, and Dolomite Churches, all of which he served several years. Recently he has been called to Woodlawn Church for all his time, which he has accepted.

Elder Adams is an attractive preacher. He speaks with great earnestness and fervor, and sometimes with eloquence. He has met with great success in his ministerial work, and for one so young has acquired considerable character as a minister of the gospel. His churches have generally prospered. We trust that he may be long spared to labor in his Master's cause, and that he may live humbly and meekly as becometh a minister of the gospel.

ELDER WILY W. WILHITE.

This brother was born in Morgan county, Alabama, May 12, 1827. He was married June 17, 1844, to Miss S. L. Hart. He first became a member of Bethany Baptist Church, Morgan county, and was licensed to preach the gospel by that church in 1847. This church was received into the association in 1845, a year before the division between the missionaries and anti-missionaries. We suppose it went off with the latter. Elder Wilhite was a missionary in principle, and it is quite likely that he joined Lebanon Church, which was organized in 1847; or, it may have been that he did not quit Bethany until later. On May 3, 1853, he assisted as one of the presbytery in organizing Mt. Zion Church, in Morgan county. He was ordained in 1848 or 1849. Whether in Bethany or in Lebanon Church, we have not been able to find out. He seems to have joined Mt. Zion Church, in 1853, for he was a delegate to the association from that church for that year, and remained a member of it until 1869. He was its first pastor, and remained pastor until 1868.

He became a member of Lebanon Church in 1869, and was a delegate from it to the association the same year. He remained a member of this church until his death, which occurred January 6, 1879. Elder Wilhite was pastor of Lebanon Church for about eighteen years, not consecutively, however. He was pastor of Enon Church for about twelve years, and of Hopewell a number of years. He also preached to other churches. He was clerk of the association, in 1858 and 1859. He was appointed missionary of the association, and worked in that capacity for several years.

Elder Wilhite was an earnest and thorough going Baptist. He preached what he believed with all the earnestness of his soul. The fact that he was retained as pastor of the churches he served for so long a time, indicates that his ministerial abilities were highly esteemed. He used very good language in his preaching, considering the opportunities he had for securing an education. And his thoughts and views of scriptural teachings were good,

and in a line with the general views of Baptists. He was bold in the expression of those views, and very emphatic. He was a strong believer in the doctrines of grace, as taught by Baptists, at the same time he was earnest in his entreaties to sinners to repent and believe in the Savior. His voice was strong, and he manifested a great deal of action in the delivery of his sermons. If he had had training in his early life, he would have made a splendid speaker. He made no pretension to oratory, but was plain and pointed in his sermons, and attracted the attention of his hearers by his zeal and earnestness in their delivery. His defects in elocution and faults in language were overlooked because of the deep sincerity which manifested itself in his countenance. Elder Wilhite did a great deal of good in his day. He was taken away in the midst of his usefulness and in the prime of his ministerial life. His widow, Sister Wilhite, survives him, and now lives at Hartsell. He also left several sons and daughters.

JOHN L. LATTIMORE.*

John Lee Lattimore, the eldest child of Elder S. S. Lattimore, was born near the town of Benton, Yazoo county, Mississippi, on the second day of March, 1836. His mother was a daughter of Elder Lee Compere. Elder Compere and his wife were first missionaries from London, England, to Jamaica in the West Indies, and were afterwards managers of the Baptist mission and school in the Creek Indian nation, till the government removed the tribes west. From infancy to advanced youth, the subject of this sketch lived in different portions of middle Mississippi, and in Sumter county, Alabama, in which States his father was pastor of churches for many years, the last church he served being that at Aberdeen, Mississippi, where he died. This oldest son of his, of whom we are writing, when but a boy at Macon, Mississippi, was furiously attacked by a large dog, and while the animal was tearing his flesh in a shocking manner, he succeeded in killing him with his pocket knife. He had the advan-

* By Mat. Lyon

tages of the best schools within reach, and at one time received instruction in Greek from Elder Mat. Lyon, at Brooksville, Noxubee county, Mississippi.

Elder Lattimore attended Georgetown College, Kentucky, and Howard College, at Marion, Alabama. On the 9th day of August, 1860, he was married to Miss S. C. Shivers, daughter of Dr. O. L. Shivers, of Marion. While engaged in teaching school at Enterprise, Mississippi, he was ordained to the ministry, on the request of the Baptist Church in that town, of which he was a member. This event took place on the third Sabbath of October, 1861, Elders D. P. Bestor and N. L. Clarke composing the ordaining presbytery. He entered immediately upon his first pastorate with Friendship Church, but before the close of the year, he enlisted as a private in the confederate army, in which capacity he served until he was appointed chaplain of the 46th Mississippi Regiment, and he thus remained until the close of the war. His unselfish thoughtfulness for others, and his devotion to duty during all his army life, won for him the high regard and brotherly confidence of his comrades and of all others to whom he ministered. He was permitted to bear honorable witness for his Master, as a minister of the gospel, and he baptized quite a number of soldiers during his chaplaincy.

At the close of the war, Elder Lattimore fixed his residence at Garlandville, Jasper county, Mississippi, and again engaged in teaching, that he might assist his widowed mother, and his two young brothers. He also accepted calls, and preached to Friendship, Sylvarena, Bethel, New Hope and Garlandville Churches. At the last named place, at his home, he suffered persecution, for faithfully preaching "all the council of God" concerning the doctrines of baptism and communion, and his school was broken up by the withdrawal of the patronage of Pedo-baptists. Being obliged for needed income to supplement the meager salary afforded by churches, he removed a short distance to Hickory, for one year. In the next year, 1868, he removed, on invitation, to Moulton, Alabama. Here Elder Lattimore and his wife conducted the Moulton Baptist Female Institute, and estab-

lished for themselves a good reputation as teachers, and as managers of that institution. He was for several years pastor of the church at Moulton, and his ministry extended also during portions of this time, to Town Creek, Enon, and Salem Churches, and he largely influenced the building of a suitable house of worship at the latter place.

In the year 1874, Elder Lattimore removed to Falls county, Texas, first living over half a year at Marlin, then for seven years in the beautiful highland region of Blue Ridge, being well regarded both as pastor and school teacher. But here, for boldly preaching unpopular gospel truths, he was again subjected to persecution. After removing for a time to northern Texas, and engaging in farming for the sake of his boys, he accepted an invitation to settle in Decatur, Wise county, following his chosen occupations of preaching and teaching. Subsequently he removed to Alexander, but soon accepted the school at Dublin, Erath county, preaching also occasionally at different points. The pastor of the church at Dublin, Elder J. T. Harris, retiring from ill health, Elder Lattimore consented to take charge of the church for one year; but he soon felt admonished, by his own failing health, to seek the usual resort of invalids in a milder climate. Dr. O'Brien, his physician and friend, being about to visit Florida with his wife, by his advice Elder Lattimore went with them to that State; but ere reaching the locality selected for his abode, his exhaustion from travel was so great, that even while on the train, slowly his life ebbed away from him. He died in the sleeping coach, on the 12th of December, 1887. His body was carried to Thomasville, Georgia, where it was embalmed, and then sent back to his saddened home in Dublin, Texas. There it was mournfully deposited in the cemetery, and there it reposes, awaiting a glorious resurrection.

"Duty" was John L. Lattimore's watchword. He had the spirit of a faithful *witness* (martyr) for Christ. He never swerved from duty, never spared himself, often *walking* from ten to twelve miles to his appointments for preaching, regardless of weather. While he was not a sensational preacher, followed by great crowds, yet his

preaching was argumentative, eminently practical, tender, earnest and instructive. It was moreover supported and supplemented by a life of such singular integrity, purity and devotion, as to win the perfect confidence of all who knew him. He was a "*living epistle*." His life was his grandest sermon. He has left to his children the invaluable legacy, as Elder Harris told them in his funeral sermon, of being able to say, "I have never known a better man than my father."

As a teacher, Elder Lattimore was conscientious and faithful, but his powers were chiefly consecrated to the pulpit. Quick to acknowledge an error, no power could drive him from his conviction of any truth which he heartily embraced. Gentle and tender as a child, he was firm as adamant when any principle was involved. One of the best evidences of his usefulness as a minister, was the sincere personal Christian affection for him, on the part of the church members of his very extensive acquaintance. The writer witnessed a touching instance of this cordial esteem, the last time he ever saw Elder Lattimore. It was at Waco, Texas, at the time of the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention at that place. He delivered to him a message from a venerable and honored sister in Christ, of Lawrence county, Alabama, the purport of which was: "Tell him I would rather see him than any body else in the world." A tearful silence prevented, for some moments, his heartfelt response to this truly Christian greeting.

Elder Lattimore left eight children, all members of Baptist churches, except the youngest, a child of nine years. His widow, his faithful and devoted helper for so many years, has the satisfaction of seeing their grown children well situated in business and life, with such established and honorable characters as well befits the excellent parentage and training they enjoyed. Mrs. Lattimore was for nearly all their married life his efficient co-worker in teaching; and how well she bore the engrossing cares and discharged the manifold responsibilities of family and school, especially during his frequent absences from home on ministerial duty, was manifest to many; but the sacrifices thus required of her, and cheer-

fully made, but few can fully appreciate. For him we may rejoice to say, "The memory of the just is blessed," and "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance"; while of her, the chief mourner at his death, we may say with equal truth, "A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband; strength and honor are her clothing; her children arise up and called her blessed. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates."

A Sketch of Church History.

ESPECIALLY CONCERNING THE BAPTISTS, IN REFERENCE TO THE DOCTRINES OF THE WORD OF GOD—IN THREE CHAPTERS.

BY ELDER MATHEW LYON.

CHAPTER I.

THERE has been, for ages, much diversity of opinion on almost every point of teaching in the Scriptures, commonly called doctrines. It is concerning a few of these doctrines only, however, that controversies have resulted in the formation of the most noted sects comprehended within those regions of the earth enlightened by divine revelation. We propose to define those particular doctrines, a strict adherence to which have distinguished Baptists from the time of Christ and the Apostles to the present day. They are included in the following items:

1. That since the fall of man into sin in the garden of Eden, all human beings, capable of understanding their duty to God, have been, and still remain, in a sinful, corrupt condition, from which they are utterly unable to deliver themselves.

2. That through the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, salvation became possible to human beings; that by faith, through prophecy, in Him to come, and through the gospel as having come, all receiving knowledge of Him since the fall of man, have either been saved by accepting Him as the Savior of sinners, or lost by rejecting Him, and neglecting so great salvation.

3. That by the power and operation of the Holy Spirit, with the use of divine truth in the mind and heart of the sinner, he is convicted of his sins, repents of them, believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, is re-

generated, is adopted into the family of God the Father, and is sealed by the Holy Spirit an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ unto eternal life.

4. That it is the duty of all such persons, without delay to make profession of their faith in Christ, and to be scripturally immersed in water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

5. That it is the immediate duty of all such immersed persons to become members of a church of Jesus Christ, and to maintain their membership in one of said churches or another, during life, "walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" (Luke 1:6), and in regular attendance, as a habit, on the meetings of the church (Heb. 10:25). And that no other persons have any right to membership in a church of Christ.

6. That all the churches of Jesus Christ are local bodies, each one relatively independent of every other in the control of its own affairs, no one having a right to dictate to, or rule over, another in the least degree, or concerning anything whatever; nor to make any law, or prescribe any point of faith or practice to its own members, or to any other church, or to any minister, or to any other human being.

7. That all appropriately recognized ministers of the gospel are such as God has first called in his own way to his work, and have been afterwards set apart, each by the church of his own membership, to the gospel ministry, and through the agency of a presbytery of ordained ministers (otherwise called elders), ordained to said work, with the laying on of the hands of such elders, and with prayer (1 Tim. 4:16; Acts 6:6).

8. That the ministers of the gospel are all equal in office and rights, no one having the least authority over another, either in himself or derived from a church, or a body of churches, or any other source; nor has any minister authority to prescribe a law or to give a command to a church.

9. That no two or more churches can combine together, or can be combined by ministerial or any other authority, so that such combined churches shall be called a church, with subordinate churches under its rule, and extending its authority over any portion of territory, large or small.

10. That no church, or body of churches, has any right to prescribe a creed, or any article of faith, or to make any law concerning the payment of money or other thing, or the performance of any service, on the part of any human being.

11. That no church has any right to admit to church-membership,

or to baptism, the infants of church-members, or any other infants, or any other persons not capable of understanding their duty to God, on the faith of their parents, or on any other ground; nor has any minister, or any other member of a church, or any other person, any right to administer baptism to any such or any other infants, or incapable persons.

12. That the churches of Christ ought steadily to observe the Lord's Supper, often enough to keep His death in remembrance, and show forth His death till He come (1 Cor. 11:25, 26); and that they, and all the members thereof, ought, through the means which God has given them, to maintain the ministry of the gospel among themselves, and to the best of their ability aid in carrying or sending the knowledge of salvation throughout the world.

13. That no body of people professing to be a church, and no combination of such bodies calling itself a church, or the church, and uniting itself with a political state or government, or being willingly ruled by laws of such government, or depending on it for temporal support, or being sustained by its authority, has any right to call itself a church of Jesus Christ.

There is conclusive evidence that the doctrines and practice of the churches of Christ continued as they began till the death of the last of the Apostles, and to the close of the first century of the Christian era. In regard to the second century, it is sufficient to quote the language of the standard ecclesiastical historian, the Lutheran writer, John Lawrence Mosheim, D. D., Chancellor of the University of Gottingen, who says, on church government, page 41: "One inspector, or *bishop*, presided over each Christian assembly, to which office he was elected by the voices of the whole people." As to church independence, he adds: "During the greater part of this century, the Christian churches were independent with respect to each other; nor were they joined by association, confederacy, or any other bonds than those of charity [love]. Each Christian assembly was a little state, governed by its own laws, which were either enacted, or at least approved, by the society."

Since neither Mosheim, nor any other known writer, gives the least hint of any change in doctrine or practice, in regard to church government or in any other respect, we feel warranted in saying, that during the greater part of this second century, the churches of Christ maintained their purity and independence, the equality of the ministry, and the administration of immersion, according to Christ's command, to those persons only who professed to be born of the Spirit, as our Savior solemnly announced to Nicodemus (John 3). They held nothing "contrary

to sound doctrine" [1 Tim. 1:10]; neither sprinkling for baptism, nor infant baptism, nor "falling from grace" on the part of the individual Christian. In short, far into this second century, all the professed churches of Christ were, as they were from their origin to the end of the first century, exactly such as are now and have been, since long before the days of Roger Williams, called BAPTIST churches. Allowance should be made for the Pedit-baptist writer, Mosheim, who speaks of a church being "governed by its own laws." Those pure churches never made "laws," but were governed by the few and simple commandments given to them in the New Testament, by their only lawgiver, Jesus Christ.

Toward the close of the second century, however, "the mystery of iniquity," which was working in the days of the Apostles (2 Thess. 2:7), manifested itself. Ungodly leaders made themselves "lords over God's heritage" (1 Pet. 5:3), and out of the churches of a whole province created one legislative body, which the Greeks called a *synod*, and the Latins a *council*. We do not say that all included in these wicked bodies were wicked people; no doubt there were many real Christians among them, just as there are, without question, among anti-scriptural organizations now calling themselves churches of Christ; and they probably wished themselves elsewhere. But what became of the true followers of Christ who were not thus enslaved? Those corrupt bodies made laws—laws mean compulsion, and concerning religion, tyranny. Persecution of course followed—"the woman," Christ's true people, "fled into the wilderness" (Rev. 12:6); "and the earth helped the woman" (Rev. 12:16), with its "deserts and mountains and dens and caves" (Heb. 11:38); and thus these faithful Christians and true Baptists lived, and witnessed often with their blood, in martyrdom, through many hundred years.

One heathen corruption, introduced in the latter part of this century, was the germ of the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory. This fancy was announced by the heathen philosopher Plato, of Athens; and now "the church" taught that only martyrs went straight to heaven, while the common herd were imprisoned at death in some obscure region, and purified from their pollutions (Mosheim, p. 43). Another corruption, derived from Syria, and also from Egypt, seemed to pretend an improvement upon the doctrine of Christ, who gave the same rule of holiness to all. But now Christians were to be classified; those of lower dignity were not obliged to be as holy as some others, while a few had to be men of exalted piety. Here we find the heathen origin of another "current reformation," the present "holiness" doctrine, which teaches, in contradiction of Paul (Rom. 7th ch.), that a Christian can

live a sinless life; contradicting our Savior also, who teaches Christians to pray, every day to the last day of earthly life, "Forgive us our sins."

It should not be surprising that this age, fruitful of evil, should adopt other heresies, the most notable and deadly of which was infant baptism. Tertullian, of Carthage, in Africa, a celebrated Latin writer, is the first who is known to have mentioned this gross error, about the beginning of the third century, and he mentions it to condemn it (see Campbell on Baptism, p. 355). Even Africans, in that early day, knew that infant baptism was wrong. Thus it is proved that this heresy was of recent invention; and it grew out of another, equally irrational, that baptism produced regeneration or was the same thing! These venerable heresies are in the very foundation of the Roman Catholic church, and have descended to her children, "grandchildren," and imitators, to the present generation. Infant baptism may be considered to have grown considerably by about A. D., 230; while as early as A. D., 150, the Montanists, who were Baptists, arose, and afterwards spread themselves in Asia, Africa, and Europe (See Haynes' Bap. Denom., p. 41).

In the third century, "church" government became still more worldly, and "degenerated toward the form of a religious monarchy" (Mosheim, p. 63). Wild, mystical notions prevailed, from mixing Platonic philosophy with religion. Men sought holiness by starving and otherwise afflicting themselves in the solitude of caves, etc. Mystical allegory took the place of plain teaching, in religion. In this century, the Novatians arose, from "Novatian, a presbyter of the church of Rome, a man of uncommon learning and eloquence" (Mosheim, p. 74). He adds: "There was no difference in point of doctrine, between Novatian and other Christians." But the Novatians insisted on rebaptizing such as came to them from the "religious monarchy," then ruling in the name of Christ. If one of their members had fallen into the commission of heinous crimes, they would never receive him back, but did not presume to say that even such could not possibly be saved. Robinson, the Baptist historian, says of the Novatians: "They were trinitarian Baptists." That is just what Baptists are now, and always have been. The fourth Lateran Council, with the emperor Theodosius to help them, proclaimed (A. D., 412): "That all persons rebaptized, and the rebaptizers, should be both punished with death. Accordingly, Albanus, a zealous minister, with others, was punished with death for rebaptizing." (See Benedict's Hist. Bapt., p. 7.) The Novatians were exceedingly numerous in various parts of the great Roman empire.

In the fourth century, the Donatists, from Donatus, surnamed "The Great," seem to have succeeded the Novatians. They were very nearly like them in doctrine and discipline. Mosheim says: "The doctrine of the Donatists was conformable to that of the church, as even their adversaries confessed" (Church Hist., p. 101). That means they were universally conceded to be orthodox; and they led pure lives. Donatus "was a man of learning and eloquence, very exemplary in his morals, and, as would appear from circumstances, he studiously set himself to oppose the growing corruptions of the Catholic church" (Benedict's Hist., p. 9). And "Fuller, the English ecclesiastical historian, an English Episcopalian, said of the English Baptists, that 'they were Donatists new-dipped'" (page 11).

Through the fifth century, the Donatists were very numerous, and, zealously opposing the corrupt political establishment calling itself "the church," were of course mercilessly persecuted; as Christ's true followers always have been, more or less (Mosheim, p. 122).

In the sixth century, the Donatists were still flourishing, and opposing Roman Catholic corruptions, when Pope Gregory carried on his war against them so barbarously and so successfully, that, in the last decade, Mosheim says, "the church of the Donatists dwindled away to nothing, and after this period no traces of it are to be found" (page 143). The meaning of this mild language seems to be, that this "zealous pontiff," as Mosheim commendably terms him—this ferocious beast, Gregory—used his utmost efforts to pursue the innocent and helpless Donatists, men, women, and children, to utter extermination.

In the seventh century, Mosheim informs us (page 155), that "A certain person, whose name was Constantine, revived, under the reign of Constans, the drooping faction of the Paulicians, now ready to expire; and propagated with great success its pestilential doctrines." From the attention of these devoted Baptists to the writings of the Apostle Paul, they came to be called Paulicians. They grew mightily during this century. They were persecuted, of course, like other "anabaptists," for rebaptizing converts who joined their churches (Benedict, p. 12). These were converts from the Roman Catholics, or the Greek church, probably from both. Baptists were also denounced as heretical, by both the Eastern and Western churches, under the names of Montenses (Mourtainees), Novatians, Donatists, and "Anabaptists." They inhabited Syria, Armenia, and portions of Europe, and were mercilessly driven into exile from one country to another, by the fury of persecution (S. H. Ford, Origin of Bap., pp. 124-28).

"The Paulicians arose within the bounds of the Greek church," says Benedict, page 51, "about the middle of the seventh century; they spread far and wide in many parts of Europe, and continued till the eleventh century, when they amalgamated with the Waldenses and other sects." This is conclusive testimony that these Paulicians, genuine Baptists, abounded in large portions of Europe and Asia through the eighth century, and continued to be well known in the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries.

In his notices of the ninth century, Mosheim mentions the inhuman persecutions of the Paulicians, mostly those of Armenia, by Constans, Justinian II, and Leo the Isaurian; after them by Michael Curopalates, and Leo the Armenian. That horrible monster, the empress Theodora, after first robbing them of everything, destroyed by fire and sword, and by torments with slow torture, more than a hundred thousand of these innocent Christians, and drove the remainder into exile. Their enemies of course charged them with various doctrinal errors, just as Baptists now are maliciously or ignorantly charged with errors in doctrine and practice. Scattered in various countries, different names were attached to them. In Italy, they were called Paterini, and Cathari; in France, Bulgarians, Publicans, and *boni homines*, good men; but from the town of Albi, in France, they were called Albigenses. They rejected infant baptism, and they were such as were called anabaptists (Benedict, p. 16; Mosheim, pp. 202-4). The Paulicians simply followed the New Testament (Benedict, p. 14), which is just what Baptists now claim to do, and which would make anybody in the world a Baptist. But this is what none but Baptists do; and therefore is "every man's hand against" us, and always has been, "beginning from the baptism of John" (Acts 1:22) unto the year 1890.

CHAPTER II.

WE have given (in the previous chapter) a historical trace of the true disciples of Christ for a thousand years from their source; and we have shown that they were Baptists, and that they were substantially such as Baptists now are. We could have given many additional facts, especially how their enemies, hunting them like wild beasts, and constantly robbing them, burning their property, and torturing and murdering them by tens of thousands, destroyed their historical records, and prevented them from making others, for transmission

to posterity. These bloody-handed slaves of the evil one created many a desert in their tracks, and doubtless called it religion and peace. We will now begin from the present generation, and "go backward through the flight of time," and show the genuine spiritual and ecclesiastical relationship of the Baptists of the nineteenth century, with those of the tenth, the Paulicians, Albigenses, and others, by what names soever they were called.

According to the "American Baptist Year Book for 1890," there were last year, in the United States and Territories, 1353 associations, 21,175 ordained ministers, 33,588 churches, and 3,070,047 members; the number baptized for the year previous being 144,575. These Baptists have seven theological institutions, thirty-one universities and colleges, thirty-two seminaries for female education, forty-six institutions of learning for both sexes, and seventeen institutions for the Indian and negro races. We here referred to only a part of what the Baptists are doing; we have not mentioned their immense use of the printing press, in newspapers, tracts, and books, and especially in circulating copies of the word of God; nor have we said a word about our missions, home and foreign, to six or seven hundred millions of the human race.

Now, from some things which we have read and heard, we doubt not that there are people in this land of intelligence, even people that can read, who believe that all these Baptists had their origin from Roger Williams and Ezekiel Holliman, who, in March, 1639, immersed one another, in Rhode Island. (See "The Tri-Lemma," by J. R. Graves, p. 122.) The plain inference is, that they, Williams and Holliman, or one of them, *invented* immersion, to take the place of pouring or sprinkling, one of which (but who knows which?) is the regular scriptural baptism! This word baptism is like no other word in any language under heaven, because contrary to common sense, having, besides its one proper meaning of immersion two other distinctly different original meanings. But the historical fact is, that Dr. John Clarke, a Baptist minister, and a practitioner of physic in London, came to Rhode Island in March, 1638, just a year before the baptismal novelty of Williams, and in that same year gathered the Baptists together, and organized a Baptist church at Newport, which church is still existing, the oldest Baptist church in America. Dr. John Clarke was immersed in Elder Stillwell's church in London, and the church received her baptism from the Dutch Baptists of Holland, who were descended from the Waldenses, and they from the Donatists, who received their doctrine and practice of immersion from the Apostles. (See "Tri-Lemma," pp. 121-2, and "The Origin of the Baptists," by S. H. Ford, pp. 23-28.)

Why then, it may be asked, do Baptists hold the memory of Roger Williams in such high regard? Because he had such understanding from the word of God as seems, for those primitive, bigoted, pilgrim times of twilight, almost like a divine revelation, teaching him that no political state, or politico-religious, as Massachusetts then was, or any other human authority, had any right to enslave or shackle the conscience of any one of God's freemen, nature's noblemen; nor to say, thou shalt worship God in this way, and not in that; or to say, thou shalt worship God in some way, whether you will or not. He was not the first in the world, but the first in his generation, enthralled as it was by Pedit-baptist bigotry, to stand out in all the genuine dignity of human freedom, and to say, in effect, to the tyrants before him, "You may whip me cruelly," as they did a poor Baptist man named Painter, in 1644, for refusing to have his child baptized, and as they did that Baptist preacher, Obadiah Holmes, in 1651; "or you may hang me," as they did a number of men and women, many years afterwards, some for being Quakers, and others for witchcraft; "or you may banish me to a wilderness of savages, but my *soul* you shall not, *cannot* enslave." Roger Williams taught the world that, on the subject of religion, no human government, whether political or church government, has the right to say to any man or woman, thou shalt not be a Baptist, or a Pedit-baptist, a Quaker, Turk, infidel, or atheist, or whatever you may please. We know not whether Roger Williams had apprehended another historical fact, that there never was a persecuting church that was not a Pedit-baptist church. As the great advocate, in his day, of SOUL-LIBERTY, for which Baptists had, at the hands of Pedit-baptists, and of heathens, and Jesus before them, suffered tortures and death for sixteen hundred years, Baptists honored him then, and they will reverence his memory through the tide of time.

We have before us an old book, called "A Confession of Faith." It is the second Charleston edition, dated, Charleston, S. C., 1813; and it was printed for the Charleston Baptist Association. This confession of faith had been "adopted by the Baptist Association of Philadelphia, September 25, 1742, and by the Charleston, in 1767." The title page opens thus: "A confession of faith, put forth by the elders and brethren of many congregations of Christians (baptized upon profession of their faith), in London and the country." Upon the next page we read: "We, the ministers and messengers of, and concerned for, upwards of one hundred baptized congregations in England and Wales (denying Arminianism), being met together in London from the third of the seventh month, till the eleventh of the same, 1689, to consider" etc. This statement is signed by thirty-seven persons, "in the name

and behalf of the whole assembly." Among the names subscribed are those of Hansard Knollys, William Kiffin, and Benjamin Keach, whom we recognize as preachers and writers of distinction. On the next page by an address "to the judicious and impartial reader," we are informed that this confession of faith "was first put forth about the year 1643," about forty-six years before. On Baptism, this confession teaches, among other true things, that it is a sign—not a *seal*, as Presbyterians teach—of "remission of sins" to the recipient, "and of his giving up himself unto God, through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life." No infant baptism nor Campbellism there. This confession further says, "Immersion, or dipping of the person in water, is necessary to the due administration of this ordinance." No sprinkling or pouring there. Now, if any person can believe, that "upwards of one hundred baptized congregations in England and Wales" who could, twice in half a century, have put forth such a confession as this, worthy to be adopted all over the United States, could have arisen among two populations of England and Wales, in those times of slow growth, within less than one year before the first publication of this confession, 1643, we think he would also be capable of believing, that "Tall oaks from little acorns grow" within less than one hundred days. And we should be of the same opinion, if we knew that, at the first publication of this confession, in the year 1643, there were not half so many congregations indorsing it.

CHAPTER III.

WE have now reached much beyond the middle of the seventeenth century, pointedly as to Massachusetts. Let us see if there were any Baptists known to history in the century before that time? Mosheim, in his "Church History," under his division of The Sixteenth Century, pp. 490-91, says: "The true origin of that sect which acquired the denomination of Anabaptists by their administering anew the rite of baptism to those who came over to their communion, and derived that of Mennonites from the famous man to whom they owe the greatest part of their present felicity, is hidden in the depths of antiquity, and is of consequence extremely difficult to be ascertained." Antiquity is pretty far back; the depths of antiquity seem still farther, almost to the first century; to be hidden there, seems to be among the churches planted by the Apostles. We may be allowed the remark, in passing, that we really do not think it necessary for Baptist writers

to keep continually referring to Mosheim as using the superfluous term, "*remote*" depths of antiquity; nor quite fair to so exact and terse a writer, unless it can be shown that his translator, Maclaine, did not, in this place, render Mosheim's Latin with precision.

Mosheim informs us in a note on the name Anabaptist, that those people rebaptized such as came to them from another communion, who were baptized in infancy; and also others who had been baptized on their profession of faith; but he does not give the reason why they did so. Now let us look at this term, Anabaptist. Webster's Dictionary shows that *ana* means *again*, and that an Anabaptist is one who baptizes again those who have been baptized in infancy, because Anabaptists denied the validity of infant baptism; and he shows further that Anabaptists require immersion. But Webster does not give the other fact, that Anabaptists also baptized again those from other churches who were *not* baptized in infancy, but after they grew up, and who received in some other communion what is called adult baptism. Neither Webster nor Mosheim, however, gave the fundamental reason why Baptists rebaptized both classes, which was, that no matter whether other churches (other denominations) baptized infants or grown people, they had *no right* to baptize *at all*, being corrupt bodies, and *not true churches of Christ*. And the principle was the same, though those applicants had been *immersed* on profession of their faith in other churches, or sects. Such bodies were regarded as having no more right to baptize than any non-professor.

But this term anabaptist, given as a name by the enemies of those true churches, proves that even they (the Roman Catholics) practiced immersion as the Scriptural baptism. If the Roman Catholics had not commonly immersed people in those times, they would not have called their opponents anabaptists, but immersionists, and would have charged them with inventing the heresy of immersion, instead of the true baptism, pouring or sprinkling. The name Anabaptist is one therefore for Baptists to glory in. It stands, a lofty, indestructible monument, like Bartholdi's Statue of Liberty, with her high-lifted torch enlightening the world. It *demonstrates*, that in those "depths of antiquity," and far beyond the rise of the Roman Antichrist, immersion was the only true, gospel baptism, as practiced by the Apostles, and by John the Baptist.

Mosheim further says of these Anabaptists, or Mennonites, as he also calls them, from Menno, their great leader in the sixteenth century, that they "started up suddenly in several countries, at the same point of time;" and that, "in a *very short time*," they "drew into their communion a *prodigious* multitude." Whence came these enormous

masses of people, millions, it looks like? Did they spring up, like Jonah's gourd, in a night? No; they came from those mountains, dens, caves, and forests, whither their ancestors had been driven by their relentless persecutors, in the tenth century. Mosheim explains: "*Before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay concealed in almost all the countries of Europe, particularly in Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland, and Germany, many persons* [he seems reluctant to admit how many; was it a million or two? And he does not intimate that these "persons" composed hundreds, if not thousands, of organized churches] who adhered tenaciously to the following doctrine, which the Waldenses, Wickliffites, and Hussites, had maintained, some in a more disguised, others in a more open and public manner, viz: "That the kingdom of Christ, or the visible church, which he established upon earth, was an assembly of true and real saints, and ought therefore to be inaccessible to the wicked and unrighteous, and also exempt from all those institutions which human prudence suggests, to oppose the progress of iniquity, or to correct and reform transgressors." These Waldenses, etc., had seen and felt enough of *human* prudence, correction, and reformation, the ignorance and gross immorality of the clergy, with the reeking corruptions of confessionals, monkish celibacy, and imprisonment of girls and women, the idolatry of the mass and the imaginary "Virgin," with rapine, robbery, inhuman tortures and shocking murders, by starving, drowning, sword, gibbet, fine, and general butchery— in short, the Waldenses were Baptists, the very antipodes of the Roman Catholics.

Cardinal Hosius, President of the Council of Trent, said, A. D., 1650, of the Anabaptists: "There have been none for these twelve hundred years past, that have been more generally punished, or that have more cheerfully and steadfastly undergone, and even offered themselves to, the most cruel sorts of punishment, than these people" (See "Tri-Lemma," p. 132). Cardinal Hosius ought to have been ashamed of himself, to dignify such "most cruel," infamous and horrible atrocities and torments, inflicted on innocent men, women and children, by the name of "punishment." Taking 1200 years from 1650, we have, by this Roman Catholic testimony, the date A. D., 450, during all which twelve centuries Baptists were thus shamefully and cruelly robbed, tortured and slaughtered. Of course, they must have existed long enough before that time, as is clearly proved by Drs. Ypeij and Dermont, Pedit-baptist scholars, who, in their "History of the Reformed Church of the Netherlands," say: "We have now seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times Mennonites, were the original Waldenses, and who have long, in the

history of the Church, received the honor of that origin. On this account the BAPTISTS may be considered the ONLY Christian community which has stood SINCE THE APOSTLES, and as a Christian society which has preserved PURE the doctrine of the gospel through ALL AGES."

We have already, from Mosheim abundantly proved the existence of vast numbers of Baptists in the fifteenth century, in various European countries. It may merely be added here, that William Tyndale, who translated the Bible into English, and the writings of Moses into the Welsh language, in 1536, was a Welsh Baptist; and that those latter people make strong claims of their descent from Apostolic churches. It is scarcely credible that this Baptist scholar, Tyndale, should have devoted his best years to this work of translation, unless there had been Baptists all around him, craving copies of the Scriptures. These Baptist populations in England and Wales could not have grown up, with schools and learning, in one generation, or one century.

John Wickliffe, the translator, the leader of those who sought the pure truths of the Bible, was born in Yorkshire, England, A. D., 1324. We do not know that he ever formally left the established (Roman Catholic) church of England any more than John Wesley ever left the established (Episcopal) church of England. Yet the followers of Wickliffe were Baptists, called Wickliffites and Lollards, and the followers of Wesley were and are Methodists. Wickliffe adhered to the Bible alone; he rejected the doctrine that grace came with baptism; he rejected infant baptism, and advocated the baptism of believers only; he defined a church of Christ as an assembly of baptized believers, just as a Baptist now would. As a Baptist in faith he was reviled while living, and, forty years after his peaceful death, his bones were dug up, and publicly burned, while his followers were terribly persecuted, in consequence of a decree of the Council of Constance, in 1415 (See Mosheim, 345). Wickliffites, or Baptists, said Sir William Newbury, the historian, "were as numerous as the sands of the sea." The Lollards (Baptists) were numerous in Holland, and elsewhere, besides in England; and a great many of them were martyrs, notably Sir John Oldcastle, who was hung up and horribly tortured to death by fire, at Tyburn, England. Walter Brute, a Welshman, a disciple of Wickliffe, and a Baptist, boldly opposed Episcopacy, and was condemned as an Anabaptist. (See Ford's Origin of Bap., pp. 76-79.)

In regard to the thirteenth and twelfth centuries, we need not make repetitions, but merely add the name of Petrobrussians (from Peter de Bruis), to the list of Baptists; so of Henricians and Arnoldists, all

Baptists, and sufferers for Christ and his truth. Henry of Lausanne, France, was a Baptist, a bold defender of the faith, and a martyr; he was sent to dungeon, and left to perish. (Mosheim, p. 289; Ford, *Origin of Bap.*, pp. 94-7.)

In the eleventh century, the Paulicians, who were Baptists, were most cruelly persecuted in Bulgaria and Thrace, by the Greeks, and were forced to emigrate, first to Italy, and thence sending colonies into nearly every other part of Europe (Mosheim, p. 257).

But we have shown enough; the evidence from the centuries is abundant, and there are records of thousands and tens of thousands of Baptists on every hand, in every age.

We have asserted at the beginning of this article, that the only baptism of John the Baptist, of Christ, and His Apostles, was immersion in water. This everybody knows is denied by many millions. While their scholars generally admit that the immersion was practiced in the first century, yet many of them argue that pouring or sprinkling was most probably also used. We respect these writers, because they have self-respect and regard for the truth enough not to assert as a positive fact, what honestly in their own view is only probable. But there are some others whom we regard differently, such, for instance, as declare positively, that immersion is not taught in the Word of God as Christian baptism. Since our present object is not controversy, we do not here designate the names of any of this latter class of writers; but we cannot help noticing this change of tactics on the part of the opponents of certain gospel truths. They seem to think it necessary to put on a bold front, to hide, if possible, the weakness of their position. Such floods of light are now shed upon the original text of the New Testament, by the aid of ministerial education, and by the immense labor of the press in books, tracts, and newspapers, that the advocates of sprinkling and pouring are reduced to the alternative, either of yielding up the whole question and acknowledging their error, or of denying positively that immersion in water is taught in the New Testament for baptism. We think there is plain evidence that the latter sentiment is endorsed by millions of professed Christians in this country.

It would be easy to present a long array of Pedo-baptists (sprinkling) scholars, who admit that the real meaning of the Greek term for baptism is immersion; yet some of them urge that probably something less than immersion was also practiced by the Apostles. On account of the great increase of light among the people generally on this point, we here adduce the testimony of two only among the acknowledged scholars and religious leaders of the world, *not Baptists*, showing that

immersion is not only the meaning of the original word for baptism, but that it is the only baptism taught in the New Testament. We select these two names because there are none more widely and familiarly known. The first is that of John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist church, who, in his "Notes upon the New Testament," says, in a note on Rom. 6:4: "We are buried with him, alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion." Paul here says that "we", that is, he, and all other Christians, "are buried with Him [Christ] through baptism into death. Wesley understood that Paul meant literal water immersion, the ancient baptism, ancient to Wesley, but an every day practice in Paul's day. Wesley does not intimate that Paul meant that the Holy Spirit had a *manner* of administering spiritual baptism to people. The use of this word "manner," by Wesley, shows that he was speaking of what *men* did, by their visible actions, not of the invisible work of the Holy Spirit. Wesley further says that this manner of baptism, *immersion*, was THE ancient manner. If this does not mean, that "by immersion" was the ONLY "manner of baptizing" in the days of Paul, then human language has no certain meaning.

Our second witness is John Calvin, who is generally regarded as the founder of the Presbyterian church. In his comment on John 3:23, "And John also was baptizing in Ænon," etc., and on Acts 8:38 (the baptism of the Ethiopian treasurer by Philip,) he says: "From these words it may be inferred that baptism was administered by John and Christ by plunging the body under water. Here we perceive how baptism was administered among the *ancients*, for they immersed the *whole body in water*." (See "Grace Truman," by Mrs. Ford, p. 360; and "Theodosia Ernest," by A. C. Dayton, p. 171.) Since Calvin was a man of profound learning, he knew perfectly well that the word used in these passages for baptizing, means immersing, and nothing less; it is plain, therefore, that he could not infer anything else, especially since he further states that the ancients "immersed the whole body in water;" his plain meaning is not sometimes, but invariably. The Scriptures inform us that it was not Jesus, but His disciples, that baptized. Then John the Baptist, and after him, the disciples of Christ, under the Master's command, performed all this work of immersing in water all professors of faith in Christ; for undeniably to this effect is the testimony of John Calvin. If this immersion of the whole body in water was not Christian baptism, and the ONLY Christian baptism, then Christian baptism is not taught in the New Testament.

The opponents of Baptists have a standing objection against their claim to antiquity. They say, in substance: You have no known historical records, beyond two or three hundred years, certainly not

beyond Luther's Reformation. This is a plausible objection with most people, because comparatively few study history closely or extensively. We admit that there are obscurities in Baptist history, as there are in some others, which nevertheless the world receives. We lately saw a grave denial, in a respectable city newspaper, of many of the statements commonly received as facts, concerning Capt. John Smith, the celebrated pioneer in the early settlement of Virginia; and the story of William Tell, of Switzerland, who was compelled to shoot an apple off his son's head, is by many regarded as a myth. When we consider the ruthless wars and persecutions carried on against the Baptists from the time of Christ, their enemies being at least two hundred to one, not only tormenting them and destroying their property, their homes, their churches, and with cruel tortures their lives, but destroying every book, and every vestige of family, church, and historical record, through the space of sixteen hundred years, it would be a wonder of our Heavenly Father's preserving providence and grace, if the world had but half the knowledge they have of Christ's true churches and people. We thank God, through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, that our history has been preserved, in great part, in what our enemies have written of their own bloody deeds; and that in this, as in many other signal instances in His divine providence, while God has caused His rebellious foes, in their writings to set their seal to the eternal condemnation of their own evil deeds, He has most wonderfully caused the wrath of man to praise Him.

What Baptists Believe About the Church.

FIRST, In a converted church membership.

Second, Believers the only scriptural subjects of baptism.

Third, Immersion in water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the baptism of the New Testament.

Fourth, Sacraments inoperative without choice and faith.

Fifth, In the independence of the churches.

Sixth, Bishops or elders, and deacons the only church officers recognized in the New Testament.

Seventh, Freedom of conscience, and the separation of church and State.

There are other doctrines believed by Baptists, which will be found in the articles of faith in this volume. The above, however, are the principles we hold with reference to the church. We have not the space to give all the arguments and Scriptures to substantiate the above principles, but only offer the reader a few suggestions and then refer him to the New Testament. When Peter preached to the people on the day of Pentecost, and they cried out, "What shall we do?" Then Peter said unto them, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:37, 38. When Philip joined himself to the eunuch, by the command of the Spirit and preached unto him Jesus, and the eunuch said unto him: "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip said, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." Upon his confession of faith, he was baptized. "They went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized

him." Acts 8:26-39. The great commission given by Christ to his eleven disciples was: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16:15, 16. The Savior told Nicodemus: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. Those who were baptized by the apostles, and were members of the first Christian church at Jerusalem, were called *believers*. Paul calls those Christians at Rome, Corinth, Ephesus and other places, *saints*, and some of them "new creatures in Christ Jesus." In Romans 6:3-6, he teaches the Roman Christians, that their baptism indicated their death and burial to sin, and their arising to live a new life, not that it (the water) cleansed them, but that it was a figure showing that they were dead to sin, and alive to righteousness, already cleansed by the Holy Spirit. These passages of Scripture show very clearly that a Christian church in the times of the Apostles was composed of baptized believers, i. e., converted people. Now what was this baptism? The Scriptures are plain upon this subject also—the baptism of Jesus. The baptism of the eunuch, already alluded to, and the passage in Romans, just referred to, all teach that it was immersion.

If we seek the meaning of the original word, from the best lexicographers, we find that they all give it to *dip*, to *immerse*; of ships, to *sink* them, as the primary meaning of the word, and no meaning that they give to the original word *baptize*, but carries with it the idea of *immersion*.

Some of the best scholars among anti-immersionists acknowledge that the word means to immerse, and that immersion was baptism in the apostolic times.

Dr. Chalmers, Presbyterian, says in his lectures on Romans 6:4: The original meaning of the word baptism is immersion, and, though we regard it as a point of indifference whether the ordinance so named be performed in this way or by sprinkling, yet we doubt not, that the prevalent style of the administration in the apostles' days

was of an actual baptism of the whole body under water." Rev. W. J. Conybeare, M. A. Episcopalian, in life and writings of St. Paul, American edition, in speaking of Romans 6:4, says: "This passage cannot be understood, unless it be borne in mind that the primitive baptism was by immersion." Neander, the great church historian, says: "In respect to the form of baptism, it was in conformity with the original institution, and the original import of the symbol, performed by immersion, as a sign of entire baptism into the Holy Spirit, of being entirely penetrated by the same." Many more writers might be quoted, who have admitted that the Baptist position concerning this word is correct. Another evidence of the truth of our position is the meaning given by the modern Greeks to the ordinance of baptism. While the Greek language has changed very much, and is, perhaps, quite different now from the Greek in which the New Testament was written, yet doubtless many words have the same meaning, and especially what are called ecclesiastical words. W. D. Powell, our missionary to Mexico, has recently returned from a visit to Greece. He writes the following to one of our denominational papers: "I found that *all* churches in Greece, *Presbyterians included*, are compelled to immerse candidates for baptism, for, as one of the professors in the college remarked: 'The commonest day laborer understands nothing else for baptize but immersion.'"

INFANT BAPTISM VERSUS BELIEVERS' BAPTISM.—There is no command found in the New Testament for infant baptism; there *is* for believers' baptism. Infant baptism is outside of the Scriptures, and not one single example can be found in them to justify the baptism of an infant. The practice crept into the Christian churches in the third and fourth centuries. Before that time, we have nothing reliable about it in church history. Dr. Bunsen says: "Pedo-baptism, in the more modern sense, meaning thereby baptism of new born infants, with the vicarious promises of parents or other sponsors, was utterly unknown to the early church, not only down to the end of the second century, but indeed to the middle of the third century."

Coleridge says in his notes on Robinson's works: "When the Baptist says: 'I think myself obliged to obey Christ scrupulously, and believing that he did not command infant baptism, but on the contrary, baptism under conditions incompatible with infancy (faith and repentance), therefore, I cannot with innocence, because I cannot in faith, baptize an infant at all, or an adult otherwise than by immersion.' I honor the man and incline to his doctrine as the more scriptural."

Neander, the church historian, who, if he had found evidence in favor of infant baptism, would have been glad to record it, in speaking of it, says: "*We have all reason for not deriving infant baptism from apostolic institutions,*" volume I, page 311.

We could multiply testimony upon this subject, taken entirely from Pedit-baptist writers, but what is the use? If the Scriptures do not command or authorize it, but do command believers' baptism; and do teach that the churches of Christ are to be composed only of baptized believers, then Christians are to govern themselves by the teaching of the Scriptures, and not by the edicts of councils, or the practices of men, however wise or good they may be.

As to the independence of the churches, this is very clearly taught in the Acts of the Apostles and in the writings of Paul. We read nowhere in the New Testament of the church at Rome exercising authority over all the other churches. The church at Jerusalem, the first Christian church, was appealed to by Paul and Peter on some questions, but because it was the church where the apostles and older Christians were who were supposed to understand what ought to be done. This church, however, never assumed to dictate to the churches elsewhere what to do, but the apostles and elders who were at Jerusalem, and who had authority given to them by the Master Himself, did instruct the Gentile Christians as to their duty. The churches organized by the apostles and others in Macedonia, Greece and Rome, and in other countries were local independent bodies. Hence we read of the churches of Asia, the church at Corinth, at Ephesus, Rome and Galatia. These churches had their own

bishops or elders and deacons, and no bishop of any one church had authority over other churches. There was no pope, no cardinals, no arch-bishops, no several conferences, no conventions, no house of bishops, no councils or general assemblies to make laws for the churches of Christ, or lord it over God's heritage. All this was the growth of after years, when corruption and sinful ambition got into the churches of Christ. The government of the churches of Christ, as taught in the New Testament, is a pure democracy, where the majority rule prevails, and the law governing them, the law of Christ as laid down by Himself and His apostles. The churches of Christ are not law-making bodies, but executive bodies, whose duty it is to execute the laws already given by their Head and chief Law-giver. As a matter of course, the very character of the churches of Jesus Christ, composed of baptized believers—regenerated men and women—forbids their union with the State. There can be no agreement between the two. To unite them is to corrupt the churches. The greatest evil that has ever befallen Christianity was the union of church and State, brought about by "Constantine, the Great." The churches of Jesus Christ do not need the support of the State. They are divine institutions, and will be taken care of by that hand that controls all things according to the councils of His own will.

The "Missionary" and "Old School" Baptists.

IN our history of the Muscle Shoals Association, we have given an account of the separation of some of the churches from the association on account of the missionary question, which occurred in 1846. The churches that went off and formed themselves into another association, called Muscle Shoals Association, assumed the name of "Primitive Baptists." These brethren contended that they were the true Baptists or "old Baptists," and that the missionaries left them, and departed from the faith and practices of Baptists. We wish in this article, to give the true history of the separation of the missionary and anti-missionary baptists. This separation ^{occurred} ~~assumed~~ at different times in different sections of the United States, and the ostensible cause was missions and the organization of Bible and tract societies, and Sunday Schools. The true cause we think was a difference of belief in the doctrines of grace. In Virginia, the "Old School Baptists" or hard shells as they were called by some, separated from the missionary or regular Baptists in 1832; in Tennessee, in 1836; in north Alabama, in the Flint River Association, in 1838, and in the Muscle Shoals Association, as we have seen, in 1846. It has been said by some of our old Baptist brethren, that they did not withdraw from the missionaries, but the missionaries withdrew from them. Well, let us see if this be so, we quote from D. B. Ray's Baptist succession a few passages which he quoted from "Religious Denominations" in U. S. and G. B., page 87. Elder S. Trott, an "Old School Baptist" of distinction, says of the separation (in Virginia): "This brought brethren, churches and associations that had been groaning under the burdens of

human inventions and impositions in religion, to *separate* themselves, some sooner and some later, from the whole mass of the popular religion and religionists, and to take a stand as a distinct people, upon the *old Baptist standard*. . . . This separation occasioned the splitting of several associations, and many churches. We took as a distinguishing appellation the name, 'Old School Baptists.'"

Dr. John M. Watson, of Tennessee, says, in his "old Baptist test," page 36: "After our painful *separation* from the missionaries in 1836, a number of churches in the bounds of the old Concord Association met together and formed the Stone River Association." We here have the admission of two prominent brethren among the anti-missionaries, that *they* separated from the missionaries. They also gave themselves a new name, "Old School or Primitive Baptists."

The Flint River Association, in north Alabama, passed what was called "non-fellowship" resolutions, and the anti-missionaries being in the majority forced the missionary part of that association to withdraw, and form the Liberty Association. Dr. George D. Norris, of Madison county, Alabama, who was clerk of the Liberty Association for many years, gives the following account of the formation of that body: "A convention was held at Enon Church, Madison county, Alabama, on Friday, November 2, 1838, to form an association." Round Island, Poplar Creek, Wofford's Section, Enon, Liberty and Athens Churches were represented. The association was formed and called Liberty, with Elder Jessee Seal, moderator and G. L. Sandidge, clerk.

It seems that these churches were members of the Flint and Elk River Associations but were non-fellowshipped and driven from them by what was termed *non-fellowship resolutions*, which resolutions were to this effect: That if any of their members should unite with any society for the promotion of the cause of benevolence or moral reform, they should be expelled from the fellowship and communion of these associations. The missionary, Bible, tract and Sunday School and temperance

societies were especially named, and a sweeping clause was added embracing all the so called benevolent institutions of the day.

These prohibitions extended not only to actual membership in their bodies, but to any contribution of their own personal funds for their support. No collection for any of these objects could be made in any of the churches, where they had the control, nor were their members allowed to cast in their mites when the box went around in any neighboring congregation in which they might be present—hence, they assumed the name of "Old School Primitive, Anti-mission Baptists." Dr. Norris remarks: "As to the name, *Old School, Old Baptists or Primitive*, they cannot justly lay any claims, for the first Baptist Association formed in America, was the Philadelphia, in 1707, still in existence (and whose minutes from 1707 to 1807, I now have before me), it was the founder of the Kehukee Association in North Carolina, by the efforts of John Gano, who was sent by the Philadelphia Association as a missionary, and on his return, made such representations, that Messrs. Benjamin Miller and Peter V. Vanhorn were sent to instruct them and organize the Kehukee Association in the year of 1765. This body the so called old Baptists claims for their origin." "The Philadelphia Association originated with churches planted by members from Wales in 1683, and from its organization has always been a missionary body as all its minutes show. I am inclined to the opinion that missions was not the cause of the disruption of the Flint and Elk River Associations, but doctrine. The anti-missionary Baptists are exclusively Hyper-Calvinists and have generally adopted the two seed doctrine of Dr. Parker." The Charleston Association of South Carolina formed in 1751, was a missionary body. In 1755, it recommended to the churches to make contributions to support a missionary in the interior settlement of that and neighboring States. The old English Baptists, our denominational ancestors, were missionary in principle and acts. In the general association of English Baptists which met in London in 1689, they resolved to raise a fund for missionary pur-

poses and to assist feeble churches; also for the purposes of ministerial education. See Benedict's History of Baptists, page 336, note one.

From this testimony, we see that the claim which our anti-missionary brethren make to the name "Old Baptists," "Primitive Baptists" has no foundation in fact. They should rather be called New Baptists. They are acting in opposition to the command of the Master, whose commission to His disciples was: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" These anti-missionary churches ought certainly to see by this time, after an experience of nearly half a century, that the Lord's blessings are not with them. They have constantly been decreasing in numbers, and seem to be making no progress, while missionary Baptists have over three millions of members in the United States.

Baptist Statistics.

WE give below statistics showing the number of churches, ministers, baptisms, educational institutions, number of teachers and pupils in them; the amounts contributed for missions, education, ministerial support; value of church property and educational property in the Baptist denomination in our own association, in Alabama, in the United States and in the world, according to the latest statistics given. Some of these are for 1889 and others for 1890. We are indebted to the Baptist year book of 1890 for the general information, and to the minutes of the Alabama Baptist State Convention of 1890, for the report for Alabama, and to the minutes of the Muscle Shoals Association for 1890, for the statistics of the associations.

Muscle Shoals Association—number of churches, fifty-three; ordained ministers, thirty-eight; baptisms, 171; members, 3,338; contributions for missions, education and other benevolent purposes, \$934.82, value of church property, \$25,750.50; Alabama: churches, 1,457; ministers, 848, baptisms, 4,399; members, 92,380; total contributions for all purposes, \$155,951.77, value of church property, \$622,923.00. The above refers to the white Baptists alone. The number of colored Baptists in the State is put down at 87,728; number of their ministers, 534; churches, 881; making a total of members, white and colored, of 180,108 in the State.

In the United States and Territories: churches, 33,588; ordained ministers, 21,175; baptisms, 144,575; membership, 3,070,047; aggregate expenditures for missions, education, salaries and expenses, \$10,199,259.61.

In North America, including the United States: churches, 34,761; ministers, 21,948; baptisms, 148,727; members, 3,202,292.

In South America—Brazil: churches, six; ministers, eight; baptisms, thirty-seven; members, 229.

In Europe: churches, 3,940; ministers, 2,779; baptisms, 4,084; members, 404,782.

In Asia: churches, 743; ministers, 433; baptisms, 5,313; members, 75,844.

In Africa: churches, forty-four; ministers, sixty-six; baptisms, 109; members, 3,039.

In Australasia: churches, 186; ministers, 112; members, 15,196.

Grand total in the world: churches, 39,690; ministers, 25,346; baptisms, 158,270; members, 3,701,382.

In the United States, Baptists have seven theological institutions; thirty-one universities and colleges, thirty-two seminaries for female education exclusively; forty-six seminaries and academies for males and females; seventeen institutions for the colored race and Indians; total institutions of learning of all kinds, 133; instructors, male and female, 1,206; pupils, 20,541; 2,163 preparing for the ministry; value of property belonging to these institutions, \$9,345,470; amount of endowment, \$9,148,349. We find from these figures that the people called Baptists are by no means an insignificant people. In numbers, we are nearly equal to the Methodist denomination, which claims to be the largest of the protestant denominations. Baptist churches will only receive those who they believe are converted. Methodists receive members on probation. If they were to count only those who are true believers, their numbers would be considerably decreased.

B *68*
R D - 68-4
~





Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: March 2006

Preservation Technologies
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111



DOBBS BROS.
LIBRARY BINDING

NOV 81

ST. AUGUSTINE
FLA.



32084

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 017 499 353 1

